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Extract from Memoirs Revd. William Shrubsole of Sheerness.

"About this time, on a holiday, he casually took up a folio-volume, written by Isaac Ambrose: and opening it he began to read that part of it, which treats of "looking to Jesus" as carrying on the work of man's salvation in his death.

He was much affected at the relation of the sufferings of Christ, and sensibly interested at the Enquiry which the Author makes, Who were the persons that brought the divine Sufferer into so much distress? "I was convinced" said he "that I was deeply concerned in that horrid transaction; and from this time, I date, the Lord first penetrated my dark mind, with the dawn of heavenly light and salvation"

Soon after this he read in the same volume a Sermon on the New Birth; and on comparing it with his own experience he found, that he was very deficient in spiritual attainments, but he earnestly longed to partake of them, and his mind appeared to hunger and thirst "for the righteousness of the Kingdom of God" As he continued his reading, he came to that part of the work which treated of "looking to Jesus in his birth" and on the words of Isaiah "For unto us a Child is born; unto us a Son is given" the author thus questions his Pages 230 & 232 Readers: Is there a child born to you? Is there a Son given unto you? These considerations much affected Mr Shrubsole, and the words of the prophet were applied with power to his heart. He wept much and prayed fervently; and it pleased God to calm all his fears, and to fill him with hope and peace.

"He now began to frame spiritual reflections on the various objects which surrounded him; his mind being almost engrossed with divine things." He seemed to himself to be translated into a new world and he reflected on the heavenly scenes which were presented to his mind, with fervent pleasure. The Love of Christ in dying for sinners, subdued all his fears of future condemnation and dissolved his soul in penitential pleasure; and he was enabled to look with a lively and appropriating faith unto Him who had been "wounded for his transgressions and bruised for his iniquities."

WORKS

OF

ISAAC AMBROSE,

SOMETIME MINISTER OF GARSTANG, IN LANCASHIRE;

NAMELY,

THE DOCTRINE OF REGENERATION.

THE PRACTICE OF SANCTIFICATION,

EXEMPLIFIED IN THE BELIEVER'S PRIVILEGES AND DUTIES.

LOOKING UNTO JESUS;

OR,

THE SOUL'S EYEING OF JESUS AS CARRYING ON THE GREAT WORK

OF

MAN'S SALVATION.

AND, THE

MINISTRATION OF, AND COMMUNION WITH, ANGELS.

WITH A SHORT MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR.

LONDON:

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1829.

PROPERTY OF
PRINCETON
THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY

BRIEF MEMOIR

OF THE

REV. ISAAC AMBROSE, B. A.

The subject of this Memoir, a native of Lancashire, was a descendant of an ancient and respectable family of Ambrose Hall in that County. His father was a clergyman; but of his personal history little is known. His situation in life, however, enabled him to favour his son with a liberal education, every way suited for the ministerial functions which he was trained up to discharge.

Having obtained a competent degree of learning from local seminaries, Isaac was sent to the University of Oxford, and in 1621 was admitted into Brazen Nose College, where he took a degree of Bachelor of Arts.

In Mr. Rees' Cyclopedia it is asserted, "that in 1641 he left the Established Church, joined the Presbyterian Party, took the covenant, and preached first at Garstang, and afterwards at Preston, in his native county; and that his zeal against the established Clergy, recommended him to the office of assistant to the commissioners, for ejecting such as were called scandalous and ignorant ministers, and schoolmasters."

Of these particulars, which, although they compliment his piety and zeal, indirectly charge him with being influenced by the fanatical spirit of the times, Dr. Calamy, in his account of the Ejected Ministers, takes no notice, with the exception of his preaching at the two places above mentioned; but even of these, the order is inverted. In the Nonconformist Memorial, we are informed, that he was for some time minister of Preston, that from thence he removed to Garstang, where the act of Uniformity found him in 1662.

It appears, that soon after the Restoration of Charles II. when the clouds began to gather round the Church, which led to the tempest, from the awful effects of which she has not yet recovered, a meeting was held at Bolton by about twenty ministers, of which number Mr. Ambrose was one, to consult what course they should take in the present alarming crisis. At this meeting Mr. Ambrose and Mr. Cole of Preston declared, in the presence of their brethren, that they would read the Common

Prayer, and should do it, the state of their respective places requiring it; and that otherwise their services among their congregation would necessarily be at an end. The ministers present, considering the circumstances of their case, approved of this decision. But Mr. Cole, afterwards Dr. Cole, declaring that he could not thus far comply, was turned out from Preston. He, however, found some stronger motive in Essex than operated in Preston, since he finally conformed, and became a lecturer at Dedham in that county.

With respect to Mr. Ambrose, notwithstanding the preceding declaration, it is well known that he lived and died a Nonconformist; but of the particular circumstances which led to the steps in which his character became decided, we have no account. We are, however, in possession of facts that are of much more importance; namely, that he was a man of substantial worth, of eminent piety, and that, for his exemplary life, he was highly respected both as a private Christian, and an approved minister of God. It is to be lamented, that his contemporaries had not collected and preserved a narrative of the various incidents which marked his life, of his unwearied assiduity in composing his various publications, of his manner of living, of his family, and associates, and of the superintending providence of God over him, when for conscience sake he abandoned his prospects of aggrandisement, and even surrendered his livelihood.

In his manner of life, there is one particular circumstance that deserves to be recorded. It was his custom, once in every year, to withdraw from all human society for about a month, which time he spent in a small hut that was erected in a wood not far from his dwelling, giving himself up to meditation, prayer, and divine contemplation. Much of this spirit, which may be supposed to be cherished by a holy man in solitude, appears in his writings; and no doubt, by this means he became better qualified for the discharge of his ministerial duties throughout the rest of the year.

The latter part of his life was spent at Preston, in warning and exhorting those around him, to make preparation for their approaching dissolution, enforcing, by his pious example, the precepts which he taught. As his end drew near, he appears to have had a strong presentiment of the solemn event. Though in perfect health, on paying a visit to his distant friends, he took his leave of them under a serious conviction that he should see them no more; and on his returning to his home, he proceeded to set every thing in order against the termination of his mortal career.

The intelligence of this awful presentiment reaching his absent friends, many, particularly from among his hearers at Garstang, came to visit him. These he received with his usual cheerfulness; and after giving them pious counsel, and conversing

freely on the things of God, he informed them that he was now ready to depart whenever his Lord should think fit to summons him to appear before his face, as he had finished all that he ever intended to write, and on the preceding evening had sent away his Discourse concerning Angels to the press. When his friends were about to take their leave, he accompanied them to the door, and waited until they had mounted their horses; and having taken his leave, he came back, shutting himself in his parlour, the place of his soliloquy, meditation, and prayer. Being thought to tarry longer than usual, the door was opened, and he was found just expiring. The state in which he was discovered rendered all assistance unavailing, his mortal course being brought to an end. This took place in the year 1664, in the 72d year of his age.

His character may be comprised in a few expressions:—He was holy in life, happy in his death, honoured of God, and held in high estimation by all good men.

His works, which are numerous, are still read with much respect and profit, and no doubt they will long continue in request, among the pious of all denominations. Of these works the following are the titles: *Prima, Media, et Ultima;* or Regeneration, Sanctification, and Meditations on Man's Misery and God's Mercy.—Looking unto Jesus.—War with devils.—Ministration of, and communion with, Angels, &c.—These works, though they had previously appeared, were all collected and printed together in folio in the year 1689. Since that time several of them have repeatedly been published in various forms, and in some few instances, from the liberty which has been taken with them, they have been made to speak a language which their author never intended. To this edition, these charges cannot apply.

On the amiable spirit which these writings breathe, the important doctrines which they inculcate, and the practical godliness which they invariably enforce, but one opinion can be entertained. Like the writings of Baxter, they have a vigorous pulse beating in every page; and it will be difficult to select a paragraph in which the author does not appear in earnest for the salvation of his readers. It is this sacred principle, rather than the learning (though even of this they are by no means destitute) which they display, that has brought them downward on the stream of time to the present hour; while many that could boast of more splendid diction and outward decorations, have sunk to rise no more.

In his treatise on Communion with Angels, he has collected together a mass of evidence in favour of his positions, much stronger than might have been expected. His conclusions he has also attempted to fortify by making an appeal to recorded incidents. Many of these, however, being taken from the dark

ages, and others being of doubtful authority, it is very probable, that in the eyes of several judicious readers, he will appear to have injured the cause he intended to promote. This work displays strong powers of mind, an acuteness of investigation, and much learning; but notwithstanding its numerous excellencies, it must be acknowledged, that fancy appears predominant in many parts; and, in its wild exuberances, attributes to supernatural agency, various phenomena which might be traced to natural causes. Many of the incidents which he has recorded are of a very remarkable character, but by no means improbable. But there are others which are of such a nature, as to stagger even credulity itself.

These blemishes are however, of little moment, when compared with the life and power that he has infused into the various subjects of which he treats. These are so strong and so influential, that the most insensible can scarcely read without catching something of his pious spirit, and admiring that devotional feeling which animates every sentence.

Mr. Ambrose was one of those excellent divines, by which the turbulent age in which he lived was distinguished. These, in their combined effulgence, irradiated the gloom of moral darkness which then prevailed, and it is to their indefatigable exertions that we are indebted for many blessings which we now enjoy. He was a star of no common magnitude, in that bright constellation of worthies, who have enriched the world by their writings, and bequeathed their example to posterity.

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WORKS
OF
ISAAC AMBROSE.

THE

DOCTRINE

OF

REGENERATION.

Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
JOHN iii. 3.

IN the prosecution of these words, we shall follow the order set down by the Holy Ghost; where is,

1. The necessity of it.
2. The generality of it.
3. The manner of it.
4. The issue of it.

First, the necessity of it: *Except a man be new born, he can never be saved.* It is our Saviour's speech, and he avers it with a double asseveration, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee.*

Again, God the Father thus counsels, not only Nicodemus, but all the Jews of the old church, saying, *Make you a new heart and a new spirit, for why will you die, O house of Israel?* Ezek. xviii. 31. Notwithstanding all their privileges, yet here is one thing necessary, that must crown all the rest; they must have a new heart, and a new spirit, that is, they must be new born, or there is no way but death.

Nor is this doctrine without reason or ground. For, man is first unholy, and therefore most unfit to enter into heaven; *Without holiness no man shall see God,* Heb. xii. 14. And what is man before he is new born? If we look upon his soul, we may see it deformed with sin, defiled with lust, outraged with passions; and thus is that image of God transformed to the ugly shape of the devil. Should we take a more particular view, every faculty of the soul is full of iniquity; the understanding understands nothing of *the things of God,* 1 Cor. ii. 14. the will

wills nothings *that is good,* Rom. vi. 20. the affections affect nothing of the *Spirit,* Gal. v. 17. In a word, the understanding is darkened, the will enthralled, the affections disordered, the memory defiled, the conscience benumbed, all the inner man is full of sin, and here is no part that is good, no not one. How needful now is a new birth to a man in this case! Can he enter into heaven, that savours all of earth? Will those precious gates of gold and pearls open to a sinner? No, he must be new moulded, and sanctified.

Secondly, Without this, man is God's enemy: no greater opposition than betwixt God and a sinner; his name and nature is altogether opposite to sin and sinners. View we those attributes of God, his justice, truth, patience, holiness, anger, power; his justice in punishing the impenitent according to his deserts, his truth effecting those plagues which he hath spoken in his word, his patience forbearing sinners' destruction till they are grown full ripe, his holiness abhorring all impurities, his anger stirring up revenge against all offered injuries, his power mustering up his forces, yea, all his creatures, against his enemies; and what can we say, but, if all these attributes are at enmity with sinful man, woe to man because of offences! Better he had never been born, than not to be new born.

Thirdly, Except by a new birth, man is without Christ; for if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: and if he be not in Christ, what hopes of that man? It is only Christ that opens heaven, it is only Christ that is the way to heaven; besides him, there is no way, no truth, no life.

Fourthly, Except a man be born again, he is a very limb of Satan, a child of drakness, and one of the family of hell. Consider this, ye that are out of the state of grace, in what miserable thraldom are your souls! Should any call you servants, you would take it highly in disdain; but take it as you please, if you are not regenerate, you are in no better case. Paul appeals to your own knowledge, *Know you not that to whomsoever you give yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom you obey?* Rom. vi. 16, 23. If then ye obey the devil's suggestions, what are you but the devil's servants? And if he be your master, what is your wages? The wages of sin is death: death of the body, and death of the soul; death here, and death hereafter in hell-fire. Alas, that Satan should have this power on man! that he who is the enemy, and means nothing to a sinner but death and damnation, should be his lord, and tyrannize it over him at his own will and pleasure! Would any man be hired to serve lions and tigers? And is not the devil a roaring lion, walking about, and seeking whom he may devour? To serve him that would devour his servant, is a most miserable bondage; and what pay can one expect from devils, but roaring and devouring, and tearing souls?

So that whether we consider man in regard of himself, or of God, or of Christ, or of Satan, he is (except he be new-born) unholy, God's enemy, out of Christ, in Satan.

And if the new birth be thus necessary, how should we labour to be born again? Now then, as you tender your souls, and desire heaven at your ends, endeavour to attain this one thing necessary; lift up your hearts unto God, that you may be washed, justified, sanctified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and that by the Spirit of God you may walk in new ways, talk with new tongues, as being new creatures, created unto good works. Thus would you wait on God in his way, I trust the Lord in mercy would remember you, and his Spirit would blow upon you, and then you would find and feel such a change within you, as that you would bless God for ever, that you were thus born again.

Such is the necessity of being born again. And as to the generality of it, all men (or all mankind) must be regenerated before they be saved; not one of all the sons of Adam shall ever go to heaven, except he be born again: let your contemplations (guided by God's word) go into the paradise above; all the saints that now walk in the light of it, were first purged by the Lamb, and sanctified by the Spirit; first they were regenerated, and so they were saved.

Secondly, (as all men, so all man) all the members of his body, all the faculties of his soul. Sanctification, if saving, must be perfect and entire, though not in respect to degrees, yet in respect of parts; every part and power of body and soul must have its part of sanctification.

And should we consider man in his parts, every part must bear a part in this birth; his body must be regenerated, his soul must be renewed: he is moulded anew, and all the members of his body are conformed to the sovereignty and rule of grace; yea, his body is preserved blameless, holy, and acceptable unto God; it is a member of Christ, the temple of the Holy Ghost: happy man that is blest with this body! Sure a man thus born again, shall see the kingdom of God.

Thirdly, as the body, so the soul of this man is to be renewed by grace; *Therefore glorify God in your body and your spirit*, 1 Cor. vi. 20. The body and the spirit must both glorify God; and as all the parts of the body, so all the powers of the soul.

First, the understanding, that in the old man is blind and ignorant about heavenly things, or if it know many things, yet never can attain to saving knowledge; in the new man must be anointed with the eye-salve of the Spirit, inspired with the knowledge of divine truths, especially with those sacred and saving mysteries which concern the kingdom of God. Again, the will that in the old man affects nothing but vile and vain things, is froward and perverse in the ways of godliness; in

the new man must prove what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God; yea, it must attend and be subordinate to the grace of God, since God indeed, and God only, *works in us both the will and the deed,* Phil. ii. 13. Again, the memory that in the old is slippery in the things of God, or if naturally good, yet not spiritually useful; in the new man must be sanctified to good performances, and although it cannot increase to a great natural perfection, (for grace doth not this,) yet the perfections it hath must be straight, and right, and guided to Godward: *Remember the Lord thy God,* saith Moses, Deut. viii. 18. Again, the conscience that in the old man sleeps and slumbers, or if it be awake, tears and roars, as if a legion of devils possessed it; in the new man must be calm and quiet, and yet not sleep or slumber, but rather in a friendly loving manner check and control wheresoever sin is, yea, never be quiet, till with kind and earnest expostulations it draws the sinner before God, to confess his fault, and to seek pardon for it. Again, the affections that in the old man are sensual, inordinate, bewitched, and set on wrong objects; in the new man must be turned another way. To sum up all; all must be renewed, the understanding, will, memory, conscience, affections.

First, I say, in the new man the understanding must be renewed; so the apostle, *The new man is renewed in knowledge,* Col. iii. 10. and this knowledge implies two habits, *wisdom and prudence,* Col. i. 9. First, wisdom; that is speculative: secondly, prudence; and that is practical. By the one, the child of God, having the eyes of his mind opened and enlightened, doth see the mysteries of salvation, the secrets of the kingdom, the whole counsel, and the wonders of the law of God; by the other he is enabled, with a judicious sincerity, to determine in cases of conscience, in the practice of piety, and the experimental passages of a christian man. If we consider the first, wisdom; how is it possible that a man unregenerate should know the mysteries of salvation? He may go as far as the power of natural discourse, and light of reason, can bear sway, he may be furnished with store of rare and excellent learning, and yet for all this want the true spiritual wisdom. The man regenerate hath the saving knowledge; he only knows God with a stedfast apprehension, he only knows himself a mean, base, and contemptible thing; his new birth hath learned him how wicked a creature he naturally is, and therefore in that respect is he odious to himself, and loathsome in his own eyes: or if we consider the second, prudence; how is it possible that a man unregenerate should experimentally know the practice of piety? Should we instance in this mystery of regeneration: here is a ruler of the Jews, and a teacher of Israel; yet, as learned as he was, if he confer with Christ about the salvation of his soul, he is strangely childish, and a mere infant·

tell him of the new birth, and he thinks it as impossible as for an old man to return into his mother's womb, and be born: the natural man cannot discern the operations of grace, he knows not that dark and fearful passage, which leads from the state of nature, into the rich and glorious happiness of the kingdom of Christ; and hence it is that many a silly man or woman, whom the worldly-wise pass by with scorn, are in spiritual affairs more wise and learned than the learnedst doctors.

Secondly, the will must be renewed; and this will of the regenerate contains two things, righteousness and readiness: it is first rectified, conformed to the will of God; secondly, it is so inflamed with the love of goodness, that he pursues it with alacrity of spirit. If we consider the first, the rectitude of the will, we see by experience the will of the unregenerate is all out of course, he wills nothing but that which is evil: how should he, considering his want of God's image, his blindness of heart, his proneness to evil, together with the vehemency of his affections, which draw the will after them? but in the man that is regenerate, the will being moved, it afterwards moves itself; God's grace that concurs with it, quickens it, and revives it; so that now his will is nothing but God's will: or if we consider the second, the readiness of the will to good, alas! the will of the unregenerate hath no pleasure in goodness, he understands not the sweetness of it, and therefore nothing is more irksome to him than the ways of godliness; whereas the will of the regenerate is willing, and this willingness indeed is the perfection of his will.

Thirdly, the memory must be renewed; and this memory reflects occasionally on a double object, on God, and the things of God. First, on God, by remembrance of his presence every where. Secondly, on the things of God, by calling them to mind at useful times. If we consider the first object, God; the unregenerate hath no mind on God, God is not in all his thoughts: like the hood-winked fool, that seeing no body, thinks no body sees him; so hath he said in his heart, *How doth God know? Can he judge through the dark cloud? Thick clouds are a covering to him that he seeth not, and he walketh in the circuit of heaven.* But, contrarywise, the regenerate man remembers his Creator in the days of his youth. And though God, as being a spirit, is absent from his senses, yet by virtue of his sanctified memory, (that makes things absent as present,) his eye is on God, and he considers God as an eye-witness of all his thoughts, and words, and doings. Or, if we consider the second object, (the word of God,) the unregenerate never burdens his memory with it; if sometimes he falls upon it, it is either by constraint or by accident, never with any settled resolution to follow it; but the soul that is regenerate, with Mary, keeps all these things in his heart: whatsoever lessons

he learns, like so many jewels in a casket, he lays them up safe and, as need serveth, makes all the good use of them he may.

Fourthly, the conscience must be renewed, and that two ways, either by drawing the soul to good, or from evil: first, to good, by restraining and bridling. If we consider its first office, (in that it draws and leads the soul to good,) the unregenerate hath not that conscience; for the most part his conscience lies dead in his bosom, or, if it stir sometimes, he labours all he can to smother it. It is otherwise with the regenerate, his conscience excites him to good, and he doth good out of conscience; he stands not upon terms of pleasure or profit, but his conscience being guided by the rule of God's holy truth, he submits to it merely out of his obedience to God: hence it is, that come what will come, his eye is fixed on God; and if man oppose where God commands, he is quickly resolved. Or if we consider the second office of conscience, in drawing the soul from evil, the unregenerate either hears not, or heeds not, his reclaiming conscience: if it speak, he first goes about to lull it asleep again; or if it cry out, and will not peace, then, in spite of goodness, he runs out of one sin into another, and usually from presumption to despair. On the other side, the regenerate hath a conscience that draws him from, and keeps him out of, evil: it is known especially by these two properties, remorse and tenderness; remorse hath an eye on all sins past, and tenderness hath an eye on all sins to come: by remorse is bred sorrow for sin, and loathing of sin; no sooner he considers how by his manifold sins he hath offended God, crucified Christ, grieved the Holy Spirit, but his heart bleeds and breaks that he hath done so wickedly against so gracious a God: this sorrow for sin brings with it a loathing of sin; he hates the very thought of it; every look back is a new addition of detestation, and every meditation makes the wound of his remorse to bleed again: by tenderness of conscience is bred a care and watchfulness to avoid sin to come; for no sooner is sin presented to his conscience, but he startles at its sight, and meditates on that strict account he must one day make for it; which thoughts and sin put together in the balance, he dares not do wickedly for a world of gain: and you may observe it, this tenderness, or easiness to bleed at the apprehension of sin, is peculiar to that conscience that is enlightened, and sanctified, and purged by Christ.

Fifthly, the affections must be renewed, and that is done by setting them upon right objects; I shall instance in some of them, as love, hatred, hope, fear, joy, sorrow. Love I place first, which in the unregenerate man is fastened inordinately upon the creature; and as one sin begets another, so on whatsoever object it falls, it gets some sin; thus the love of riches breeds covetousness, love of beauty breeds sensuality: whatso-

ever he loves, the object being earthly, it brings with it some sin; and thereby, the worst of all, he wickedly prefers earth to heaven, a dunghill to paradise. But the regenerate man settles his love upon other objects: as he that is carnal, minds things carnal, so he that is spiritual, loves things spiritual; no sooner is he turned, by a sound and universal change of the whole man, from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, but he presently begins to settle with some sweet contentment, upon the flowers of paradise, saving graces, and his infinite love runs higher and higher, till it embrace him that dwells in the highest, God Almighty: and how sweet is that love that casts itself wholly into the bosom of his Maker! How blessed is that man, that yearns, and melts, and cleaves, and sticks unto his gracious God above all!

The second affection is Hatred, which in the unregenerate is so inordinate, that he is *an hater of God,* Rom. i. 30. not that he hates God in himself, but in some particular respect, because he restrains him from his pleasure, or punisheth him for his sin, or crosseth his appetites by his holy commands. As he hates God, so likewise his brother. Hence arise those envies, emulations, jars, contentions, among those that profess themselves Christians; but of all brethren he hates them most, of whom our Saviour is the first-born. God's faithful ones ever were and ever will be signs and wonders, and monsters, unto many; a scorn, reproach, and derision, to them that are round about them: but he that is regenerate hates sin in whomsoever it rules; in others, and in himself, when after the commission of any evil he begins to repent, and *to abhor himself,* as Job did, *in dust and ashes,* Job xlii. 6.

The third affection is Hope. Now this hope in the unregenerate is fastened on this world, and the things of this world; he hopes for preferment, riches, or the like; as for his hope of heaven, it is but a waking man's dream: a dream? said I. Yes, as dreams in the night fill us with illusions, (you know a beggar may dream he is a king,) so hope, abusing the imagination of the unregenerate, fills their souls many a time with vain or empty contentments: but the hope of the regenerate both enjoys the right object, and right means; his eye is fixed on future good; and he endeavours to pursue it, till he get the possession. If in the pursuit he meets with crosses, griefs, disgraces, sicknesses, or any other calamities, his hope is able to sweeten the bitterest misery that can possibly befall him; the afflictions of this life bid him look for a better, a cross here minds him of the glory above.

The fourth affection is Fear, which in the unregenerate is either worldly or servile: if it fasten on the world, then he fears the loss of his credit or of his profit, and because he and the world must part at last, he fears this separation above all

fears: O death, saith the wise man, how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man that liveth at rest in his possessions, unto the man that hath nothing to vex him, and that hath prosperity in all things! Or if his fear reflect on God, then it is a servile fear; for as the servant or hireling works not for love of his master, but only for fear of punishment; so he fears God, for fear of punishment due to him from God: it is otherwise with the man that is born again; his fear is either initial or filial: in pangs of the new birth, or in the new-born babe, it is called initial; because then he casts away sin both out of God's love, to which he hath partly attained, and out of the woeful effects of sin, which he hath thoroughly considered; with the right eye he beholds God, and with the left eye he beholds punishment; so that this fear is a middle, as it were, betwixt servile and filial fear; and as the needle draweth in the thread, so this fear draweth in charity, and makes way for filial fear; to which, if by growth in grace he be fully ripened, then he fears God out of love to God, as the prophet Isaiah proclaimeth, *The fear of the Lord is his treasure,* Is. xxxiii. 6. Never was treasure more dear to the wordlings, than is God's fear to him: his love of God, his desire to please God, and his fear of being separated from God, keep him in such awe, that though no punishment, no death, no hell, were at all; yet he would not sin for a world of treasures.

The fifth affection is Joy, which in the unregenerate is sensual and brutish; it hath no better objects than gold, greatness, honours, or the like: and what are all these but a shadow, a ship, a bird, an arrow, a post that passeth by? or rather, as crackling of thorns under a pot, as flashes of lightning before everlasting fire? But the joy of the regenerate is a spiritual joy, and the matter of it is the light of God's countenance, righteousness, or the promises of God's word; or, above all, God Almighty, blessed evermore: Thus David, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee,* Psal. lxxiii. 25. This is that joy which no man can conceive, but he that enjoys it; this is that *white stone,* Rev. ii. 17. whose splendour shines only upon heavenly hearts; this is that glimpse of heaven's glory, which springing up in a sanctified heart, out of the wells of salvation, and carried along with addition of fresh comforts (from the word and sacraments) through a fruitful current and course of man's life, at last falls into the boundless and bottomless ocean of the joys of heaven.

The sixth affection is Sorrow, which in the unregenerate is a worldly sorrow, and the effects of it are death; so the apostle, *The sorrow of the world worketh death,* 2 Cor. vii. 10. In this kind, how endless are the sorrows of men for their losses or crosses that may befal them; and howsoever some may endeavour to comfort them in Christ, nothing can relish with them

that concerns heaven or salvation. But in the regenerate, the beholding of sin breeds sorrow, and this the apostle calls *godly sorrow, working repentance to salvation not to be repented of.*

Examine then yourselves, you that desire heaven at your ends. Would you inherit the kingdom? Would you live with angels? Would you save your souls? Examine and try whether your bodies and souls be sanctified; and if you have no sense or feeling of the new birth, then never look to see in that state, the kingdom of God; but if you perceive the working of saving grace effectually in you, (and you cannot but perceive it if you have it,) if you feel the power of godliness first seizing the heart, and after dispersing itself over all the parts and powers of body and soul; if your hearts be softened by the Spirit, if your eyes wait upon God, if your ears listen to his word, if your tongues shew forth his praise, if your understandings attain to saving knowledge, if your wills conform to the will of God, if your memories be stored with heavenly doctrine, if your consciences be tender and sensible of the least sin, if you love that which is good, if you hate that which is evil, if you hope for the blessings above, if you fear him that can destroy both body and soul; in a word, if you joy in goodness, if you sorrow for sin, then are you born again. Happy man in this case that ever he was born! and thus every man must be, or he cannot be happy. *Except a man* (every man, every part of man) *be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

We come now to speak of the manner of it.

Except a man be regenerated, or begotten, saith Valla; as man that is born of a woman is begotten of a man, so he that is born again must have a begetting too. If you ask of whom is the new man begotten, St. James tells you, (Jam. i. 18.) *Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth:* the former words note the impulsive cause, the latter the instrument; it was God that begat us, and with the seed of the word.

It was the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, but in respect of the last act, it is of the Holy Ghost, and not of the Father or the Son; and thus our Saviour concludes, John iii. 6, 8. *That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit; and so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*

Secondly, as God's spirit is the principal, so God's word is the instrumental, cause of our regeneration, *Ye are born again, not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever,* 1 Pet. i. 23. *And this word,* saith the author of the Hebrews, *is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, &c. and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart,* Heb. iv. 12. They that are born again, cannot but remember how quick, and powerful, and sharp, God's word was at their regeneration: first, like an hammer it beat on their hearts till it broke them all to

pieces; and then like a sword, by a terrible cutting, piercing power, it struck a shaking and trembling into the very centre of their souls; last of all, like oil it began to supple their wounds, and to heal their bruises, and to refresh the weak and tender heart with all the promises of God revealed in Christ. And thus a man being begotten of the Spirit with the word of truth, he comes at last to the birth; to be born again, to be born after the spirit; and this is that second birth: a man is first born of the flesh, and he must be again born of the Spirit.

Hence appears the difference of the first and second birth—the first birth is of the earth, earthly, the second birth is of the Lord from heaven; the first birth is of nature, full of sin; the second is of grace, full of sanctity; the first birth is originally of flesh and blood, the second birth is originally of the Spirit and water: in a word, the first birth kills, the second gives life; generation lost us, it must be regeneration that recovers us. O blessed birth, without which no birth is happy; in comparison of which, though it were to be born heir of the whole world, all is but misery!

As to the new birth itself, I know it is not wrought in all after one manner, nor is the manner known to us, but only so far as it is sensible in us, and therefore we must consider man before baptism, in baptism, and after baptism.

In some is the new birth wrought before baptism, as in the eunuch under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, Acts viii. 37. and in Cornelius, together with his kinsmen and near friends, Acts x. 47. and so our charity tells us, that every infant dying before baptism, is renewed by the Spirit; but the manner of this working we know not, for it is the secret of the Spirit of God. In others is the new birth wrought in baptism, which indeed is the sacrament of the new birth, and seal of regeneration; but howsoever we see the outward seal, yet we see not the manner of the inward working; for this also is the secret of the Spirit of God. In others is the new birth wrought after baptism; for whensoever men receive Christ by faith, then do they feel the power of God regenerate them, and work all things in them which he offered in baptism: now the manner of this feeling, or of God's Spirit working, proceeds usually thus.

There are certain steps by which it passeth; and howsoever in those whom God hath blessed with great favour of holy education (the Spirit of God dropping grace into their hearts betimes) these steps or degrees are not so easily perceived; yet in those men who have lived long in sin, no sooner come they to a new birth, but they can feel grace work in them step after step, and these steps we shall reckon to the number of eight.

The first is a sight of sin, and this our Saviour reckons the first work of the Spirit: *When he is come, he will reprove the world of sin,* John xvi. 8. Of sin, how? Why thus: no sooner

begins this blessed change from nature to grace, but the conscience, wrought upon by God's word, opens its book, and presents the soul a roll of those many, mighty, heinous sins, committed against God and man: there he may read in bloody burning lines the abominations of his youth, the sins of all his life; and to bring them into method, the commandments of God stand as a remembrancer before his eyes: the first tells him of his loving somewhat above God; the second, of his worshipping a false god, or a true God after a false manner; the third, of his dishonouring the great and mighty name of God; the fourth, of his breaking the Lord's day, either in doing the works of the flesh, or leaving undone the works of the Spirit: nor is this all; as against God, so against his neighbour hath he sinned; the fifth tells him of his stubbornness and disobedience; the sixth, of his passions, and desires of revenge; the seventh, of his lewdness; the eighth, of his covetous thefts; the ninth, of his lies and slanders, backbitings, and rash judgments; the tenth, of his covetous thoughts, and motions of the heart to all manner of evil. Good Lord! what a number of evils, yea, what innumerable swarms of lawless thoughts, and words, and actions, doth he read in his conscience? But above all, his beloved sin is writ in greatest characters; this he finds to have bewitched him most, and to have domineered above all the rest in his wasted conscience; where, that he may read it, together with his other sins, the Spirit of God now opens the eyes of his mind, and lets him see the very mud and filth of his soul, that lay at the bottom before unseen and undiscerned. This is the first working of the new life, to wit, a feeling of the old death of his soul in sins and trespasses: and here the axiom is true, no generation without corruption; a man must first feel this death, before he is born again.

The second step is a sense of divine wrath, begetting in him fear. No sooner hath the man a sight and feeling of his sin, but then God's spirit, now called the spirit of bondage, presents to him the armoury of God's flaming wrath and fiery indignation; this makes him to feel as if he were pricked with the stroke of an arrow, or point of a sword, that he is a most accursed and damnable creature, justly deserving all the miseries of this life, and all the torments of hell in that life to come; yea, this makes him tremble, and stand, and look, as if he were thoroughly frighted with the angry countenance of God Almighty. Would you view him in this case? his conscience hath now awaked him out of his dead sleep, by the trumpet of the law; his heart is now scorched with the secret sense of God's angry face; his soul is now full sorely crushed under the most grievous burden of innumerable sins: his thoughts are now full of fear and astonishment, as if no less than very hel

and horror were ready to seize upon his body and soul. I say not what measure of this wrath is poured on all men, for I suppose some feel more and some less; but I verily believe, some there are that, in these pangs of the new birth, have been scorched, as it were, with the very flames of hell. And no wonder, for this is the time of fear; now it is that Satan strives busily to stifle the new man in the womb; and therefore he that before diminished his sins, and made them appear little in his eyes, when he once sees the man smitten down in the place of dragons, and covered with the shadow of death, then he puts into his mind his innumerable sins, and, that which immediately follows, the curse of the law, and the wrath of God, which he yet makes more grisly and fierce, with a purpose to plunge him into the abyss of horror and despair. By this means he persuaded Cain to cry out, *My iniquity is greater than can be forgiven.* Thus far the unregenerate goes with the man born again,—both have a sight of sin, and sense of wrath,—but here they part; for the man unregenerate either sinks under it, or labours to allay it with worldly comforts. But the man born again, seeks the right way to cure it, and at last, by the help of God's spirit, he passeth quite through it; I mean, through this hell upon earth, into the spiritual pleasures of the kingdom of grace, which is to be born again.

The third step is, sorrow for sin, and this is more peculiar to God's child; his heart grieves, his eye weeps; the way to God's kingdom is to cry like children coming into the world; the way to be new-born is to feel throes, as a woman in travail; and so is Christ formed in us. Can a man be born again without bitterness of soul? No, if ever he come to a sight of sin, and that God's sanctifying Spirit work in him sorrow for sin, his soul will mourn. True it is, some infants are born with more pain, and some with less: but more or less, it cannot be so little, but the man that labours in these pangs shall mourn.

The fourth step is, seeking rightly for comfort. He runs not to the world, or flesh, or devil, miserable comforters all; but to scripture, to prayer, or to the ministry of God's word; if he finds comfort in scriptures, he meets with it in the gospel: and if it please God that the man, now labouring in his pangs of the new birth, do but rightly settle his thoughts on the gospel of Christ, no doubt but thence he may suck the sweetest comforts that ever were revealed to man. Or if he find comfort in prayer, to which he ever and anon repairs in every step, then is it by Christ, in whose name he only approacheth to that throne of grace: no sooner had the king of Nineveh humbled himself, but his proclamation runs, *Let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger?* And thus the man, now wrestling with grievous terrors of con-

science;—who can tell, saith he, if God will turn away his fierce anger? Let me then cry mightily unto the Lord of heaven; let me cry, and continue crying, until the Lord of mercy look upon me: and if for all this God give him a repulse, for reasons best known to himself; if at the first, second, third, fourth, or at many more times, he seem to have cried in vain, at last he flies to the ministry of the word, and if he may have his will, he would hit upon the most soul-searching man amongst God's messengers. At last he comes to God's minister, with a *what shall I do? what must I do to be saved?* Alas! now I feel the wounded conscience, the broken heart, the spiritual blindness, the captivity and poverty, of which often you have told me: if then there be any instruction, direction, or duty, which may tend to my good, now direct me in God's fear, and I will willingly follow it with my utmost endeavours.

And now, and not till now, hath God's minister a strong and seasonable call to magnify the sufficiency of Christ's death and passion: were the blood of Christ, and promise of salvation, proffered to an unwounded conscience, what were it, but like the pouring of a most sovereign balsam upon a sound member of man? It is the only, right, everlasting method, first to wound by the law, and then to heal by the gospel; and therefore when the heart is broken, then hath the man of God his warrant to bind it up again, then may he magnify God's mercy, then may he set out to the height the beauty of Christ's passion and person, and thus by his high and holy art of comforting the afflicted, at last the child of God, prepared for his birth, is born again.

The fifth step, is a clear, I say not a general sight, which he had before, but the clear sight of Christ laid open to the eye of faith: no sooner is the poor wounded soul informed thoroughly in the mystery and mercy of the gospel, but he then looks on his Saviour as the Jews on the brazen serpent, and seeing him lifted up on the cross, he cannot but see in him an infinite treasury of mercy and love, a boundless and bottomless sea of tender-heartedness and pity, a whole heaven of sweetness, happiness, peace, and pleasures. After the spirit of bondage, enters the spirit of adoption; the terrors of the law lead him to the comforts of the gospel; his sorrow for sin brings him to the clear light of his Saviour; and then as a man in death-pangs, that lifts up his eyes to heaven, so he in birth-pangs lifts up his eyes to Christ, who must either help him, or he sinks under his sin to the bottom of hell. And this sight of Christ Jesus to an humbled sinner, together with those glorious privileges which he brings with him, is a most pleasant, ravishing, heavenly sight. Not all the curious sights on earth, nor all those glittering spangles in heaven, can possibly afford such pleasure to the eye of man, as doth

this one object, Christ bleeding on the cross, to the soul of a sinner. Imagine you saw some malefactor led to the place of execution; if this man should suddenly see his king running towards him with his pardon in his hand, what a sight would this be! Thus it is with the man sorrowing for sin; whilst he is weeping his case, and confessing what a little step there is between him and damnation, in amaze he looks upon Christ, whom he sees with a spear in his side, with thorns on his head, with nails in his feet, with a pardon in his hands, offering it to all men, that will but receive it by faith. Oh! here is a sight indeed, able to revive the wickedest man upon earth, dead in trespasses and sins. And now there is hopes of the birth. We may call this the stirrings of God's child, or the first feelings of life, before he is born again.

The sixth step is, an hungering desire after Christ and his merits. O here is a thirst above all thirsts! It breeds ardent desires, vehement longings, unutterable groans, mighty gaspings, just like the dry and thirsty ground, that gasps and cleaves and opens for drops of rain. This is that violent affection that God puts into the hearts of those who seek him in sincerity and truth: never was Ahab more sick for a vineyard, nor Sisera for milk, nor Samson for water, than is a truly humbled soul after Christ; ever thirsting and longing that he may hide himself in that blood which his Saviour shed for him. I have read of a gracious woman, who labouring in these pangs, and longing after Christ Jesus, cried out, "I have borne nine children with as great pains as other women, and yet I would with all my heart bear them all over again, yea, bear them all the days of my life, to be assured of my part in Christ Jesus." One replying, "Doth not your heart desire and long after him?"—"Oh, (said she,) I have an husband and children, and many other comforts; I would give them all, and all the good I shall ever see in this world, or in the world to come, to have my poor thirsty soul refreshed with that precious blood of my Saviour." So eager and earnest is the heart of each man, parched with the angry countenance of God, after this blood of his: I thirst, I faint, I languish, I long, saith he, for one drop of mercy; my spirit is melted in me into tears of blood; my heart, because of sin, is so shaken and shivered,—my soul, because of sorrow, is so wasted and parched,—that my thirst is insatiable, my bowels are hot within me, after Christ. Stay; all these expressions are far short of those longings: no man knoweth them, save he that receives them, save he that is born again.

The seventh step is, a relying on Christ: a man no sooner considers those invitations of our Lord and Saviour; *If any man thirst, let him come unto me: Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters: Come unto me, all ye that are weary and*

heavy laden; but, resting himself on these blessed promises, he throws himself into the merciful arms of his crucified Lord. Come life, come death, come heaven, come hell, come what will, here will he stick for ever: *Who,* saith Paul, *shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? No, I am persuaded,* (not these, nor more than these,) *neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, &c. shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord,* Rom. viii. 35, 38, 39. Thus it is with the man labouring in this birth: What! saith he, doth Christ call the heavy-laden? Why, Lord, I am heavy laden with a weight, a mass of sin; and if he may come that is called, Lord, I come, I come, and now I come; with thee will I build my tabernacle, with thee will I rest for ever. This affiance, dependence, reliance, or whatsoever else we call it, upon the merits of Christ, is the right justifying faith, whither if a man once come, there is but one degree more, and he is then born again.

The last and highest step is, universal obedience to Christ. No sooner hath he cast himself upon him, but he takes him, not only as a Saviour to redeem him from the miseries of sin, but as an husband, a lord, a king, to serve him, love him, honour him, and obey him: now will he take his yoke upon him; now will he bear his cross, and follow him; now will he walk in the holy path; now will he associate himself to that sect that is every where spoken against; now will he oppose himself against all sin whatsoever; now will he shake off his old companions, brethren in iniquity; now will he keep peace and a good conscience towards God and man; now will he watch over his secret sins, occasions of evil; now will he direct his words to the glorifying of God, and to give grace to the hearers; now will he conform all his actions to the sovereignty of grace; now will he delight in the word, the ways, the saints, the services, of God; will sell all, all that he hath, even all his sins, to the last filthy rag of his beloved bosom sin. And now *old things are passed away, behold all things are become new,* 2 Cor. v. 17. His heart, his eye, his ear, his tongue, his understanding, his will, his memory, his conscience, his love, his hatred, his hope, his fear, his joy, his sorrow, (will you any more?) his thoughts, his words, his actions, his affections—are all new; this conversion is universal, this change is a thorough change; now is Christ formed in him, now is he transformed into a new creature, he is made new; God the Father accepts him for his son, God the son stamps upon him the image of his Father, but more immediately God the Holy Ghost hath thus moulded and fashioned him, as I have let you see him, and now he is

born again, which except a man be,—he (shall not) cannot see the kingdom of God.

> Lo here those steps that raise up a man to the state of regeneration;—a sight of sin, sense of misery, sorrow for sin, seeking for comfort, a sight for Christ, desire after Christ, relying on Christ, obedience to Christ. One word more before we have done.

You see how God brings along the man whom he purposeth to make his; and yet let no truly humbled sinner be discouraged if he observe not so distinctly the order of these steps, and especially in that degree as we have related; for if in substance and effect they have been wrought, if he have them in truth, though perhaps not in this degree, I dare pronounce, that he is surely born again. It is one of our worthies has said, "In our humiliations, and other preparative dispositions, we do not prescribe precisely just such a measure and quantity, we do not determine peremptorily upon such or such a degree and height, we leave that to the wisdom of our great Master in heaven. But sure we are, a man must have so much, and in that measure, as thoroughly to humble him, and then to bring him to his Saviour; he must be weary of all his sins, and of Satan's bondage wholly, willing to pluck out his right eye, and cut off his right hand; I mean, to part with his beloved bosom-lusts, to sell all, and not to leave so much as an hoof behind: he must see his danger, and so haste to the city of refuge; he must be sensible of his spiritual misery, that he may heartily thirst for mercy; he must find himself lost, that Christ may be all in all unto him; and after must follow an hatred of all false and evil ways for the time to come, a thorough change of former courses, company, conversation, and setting himself in the practice of sobriety, honesty, and holiness." And another speaks, "That the discovery of the remedy as soon as the misery, must needs prevent a great part of the trouble, and make the distinct effects on the soul to be with much more difficulty discerned: nay, the actings of the soul are so quick, and oft so confused, that the distinct orders of these workings may not be apprehended, or remembered. And perhaps the joyful apprehension of mercy may make the sense of misery sooner forgotten." The sum is—of every soul is required thus much: first, a truly penitent sight, sense, and hatred, of all sin. Secondly, a sincere and insatiable thirst after Christ, and his righteousness, both imputed and inherent. Thirdly, an unfeigned and unreserved resolution of an universal new obedience for the time to come. If any man hath had the experience of these affections and effects in

his own soul, whatsoever the order, or whatsoever the measure be, he may go on comfortably in the holy faith.

Now then let me advise thee, whosoever thou art that readest, to enter into thine own soul, and examine thine own state, whether or no thou art yet born again? Search and see, whether as yet the spirit of bondage hath wrought its effects in thee; whether thou hast been enlightened, convinced, and terrified with a sensible apprehension, and particular acknowledgment, of thy wretched estate? Search and see, whether as yet the Spirit of adoption hath sealed thee for his own; whether, after thy heart being broken, thy spirit bruised, thy soul humbled, thy conscience wounded and awakened, thou hast had a sight of Christ, and hast thirsted after him, and hast followed his ways and commandments by an universal obedience: If upon search thou canst say,without self-deceit, that so it is with thee, then mayest thou bless God that ever thou wast born; certainly, I dare say it, thou art born again. But if not, if all I have spoken are very mysteries to thee, what shall I say? If ever thou meanest to see the kingdom of God, strive, endeavour with all thy might, to become truly regenerate. Thou mayest say, perhaps, it is not in thy power; who can command the Spirit of the Lord, that bloweth where he listeth? I answer, it is indeed the Spirit, and not man, that regenerates or sanctifies; but I answer withal, the doctrine of the gospel is the ministration of the Spirit, and wheresoever that is preached, as I preach it now to thee, there is the Holy Ghost present, and thither he comes to regenerate. If then as yet thou feelest not this mighty work of God in thee, and yet fain wouldst feel it; I shall lend thee two wings to bear thee, two hands to lead thee, to the foot of the ladder, where if thou ascend these steps aforesaid, I dare certainly pronounce of thee, thou art born again.

The first wing is prayer, which first brings thee to God's throne, and then to the new birth; Hos. xiv. 2. *Take with you words, and turn to the Lord; say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously;*—and then it follows, *I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely.*—The soul may object, I may say thus, and be no better. But I answer, Say it, though you be no better, because God bids you say it: Say it, and say it again; it may be he will come in when you say it.—The soul may object again, How can I pray, and have not faith? I answer, Put thyself upon prayer, and who knows but blessing and faith may come? it is the Lord that converts, and heals, and saves; and prayer is the means to produce this effect: when we are required to pray, to repent, and believe, we are not to seek strength in ourselves, but to search into the covenant, and turn the promise into prayer. Therefore bow thy knees, and humbly, heartily, frequently,

fervently, implore the influence of God's blessed Spirit Wouldst thou ask, and continue asking, wouldst thou cry, and continue crying, then could I assure thee of the promise which God hath made, and cannot deny; *He that asketh receiveth,* and *he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh* (by continuance and perseverance) *it shall be opened,* Matt. vii. 8.

The second wing that bears thee to these steps of the new birth, is, constant hearing of the word: thou must attend the gates of wisdom, and wait on her posts: thou must come to God's house, and hearken to the ministry of the word; and thou shalt see at one time or other God will remember thee in mercy: it is true I know not when, and therefore I wish thee miss no day to repair to God's house, lest the day of thy neglect might have been the day of thy conversion. Certain it is, no man should expect God's blessing without his ordinances, no eating of bread without ploughing and sowing, no recovering of health without eating and drinking; so no blessing, no grace, no regeneration, without waiting upon God in his ways, and in his ordinances. Now then, as thou desirest heaven, or the way to heaven, to be born again, I beseech thee make high account of this ordinance of God. In preaching of the gospel, light, motion, and power, go out to all, which men resist; and some are destroyed, not because they could not believe, but because they resist, and will not obey, and so die, Acts vii. 51. Luke xiii. 34. Ezek. xxxiii. 11 Hos. xiii. 9. and yet I wish thee not only to hear it, but after thou hast heard, consider of it, ponder on it; and lay the threats and reproofs, the precepts and promises, unto thine own soul: thus if thou hearest and meditatest, I doubt not but God's word will be a word of power to thee, and, together with prayer, bring thee towards the new birth.

To see, is all one as to enjoy; yet a man may see that which he doth not enjoy: but without regeneration there is no sight, much less possession, of the kingdom of God.

If by the kingdom of God, is meant the kingdom of grace, whereof our Saviour speaketh, *The kingdom of God is within you,* Luke xvii. 21. see to what a privilege the new man hath attained; all the graces of God, all the fruits of the Spirit, are now poured into him. If you ask, what graces? what fruits? Paul tells you, Gal. v. 22. *Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance;* or, would you have us to contract them? Paul doth it elsewhere, *The kingdom of God is,—righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost,* Rom. xiv. 17.

First, Righteousness. No sooner is a man born again, but he enters into the holy path, he declines all evil, and stands at the sword's point with his beloved sin; or if ever any sin, through the violence of temptation, seize on him again, he

is presently put again into the pangs of the new birth, and so renewing his sorrow, and repairing repentance, he becomes more resolute and watchful over all his ways. And as he abhors evil, so he cleaves to that which is good: his faith, like the sun, sets all those heavenly stars on shining,—hope, and love, and zeal, and humility, and patience; in a word, universal obedience, and fruitfulness in all good works: not one, but all good duties, of the first and second table, begin to be natural and familiar to him.

Secondly, no sooner is a man righteous, but he is at peace with man, at peace with God, at peace with himself. He is at peace with man; *The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard with the kid,* saith the prophet Isaiah, chap. xi. 6. The meaning is, that in the kingdom of Christ, when a man is called into the state of grace, howsoever by nature he is a wolf, or a leopard, or a lion, or a bear, yet he shall then lay aside his cruelty, and live peaceably with all men. He is at peace with God, he hath humbled himself, and confessed his fault, and cried for mercy, and cast himself upon Christ; so that now God, by his word, hath spoke peace to his soul; by the mediation of Christ it is obtained, and by the testimony of the Spirit he feels it within him. This is that peace which passeth all understanding. He is at peace with himself, I mean his own conscience; that which before stirred up the fire. that brought him to a sight of sin and sense of divine wrath, that filled him with fearful terrors, remorse and sorrow, is now quiet. Solomon calls it *a continual feast,* Prov. xv. 15. Who are the attendants, but the holy angels? What is the cheer, but joy in the Holy Ghost? Who is the feast-maker, but God himself, and his good Spirit dwelling in him? Nor is this feast without music; God's word and his actions make a blessed harmony, and he endeavours to continue it by keeping peace and a good conscience towards God and man.

Thirdly, from this peace issueth joy in the Holy Ghost: no sooner is a man at peace with man, with God, with himself, but he is filled with joy that no man can take from him: this joy I take to be those blessed stirrings of the heart, when the seal of remission of sins is first set unto the soul by the Spirit of adoption. For thus it is, the soul having newly passed the pangs of the new birth, it is presently bathed in the blood of Christ, lulled in the bosom of God's mercies, secured by the spirit of its inheritance, and so ordinarily follows a sea of comfort, a sensible taste of everlasting pleasures.

If by *the kingdom of God,* is meant the kingdom of glory, see then what a privilege waits on the new man; no sooner shall his breath and body be divorced, but his soul, mounted on the wings of angels, shall straight be carried above the starry firmament, there to inherit the kingdom of God, truly

called so, for 'tis a kingdom of God's own making, beautifying, and blessing; a kingdom beseeming the glorious residence of the King of kings. But here my discourse must give way to your meditations. In this fountain of pleasure, let the new born Christian bathe his soul; for his it is, and he it is only that shall see it, enjoy it: *Except a man be born again, no man shall ever see the kingdom of God.*

Thus far of the privileges of the new birth: there waits on it faith, and righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; in a word, the kingdom of grace and the kingdom of glory.

THE

DOCTRINE OF REGENERATION,

FURTHER EXPLAINED.

CHAP. I.

THE OCCASION AND METHOD OF THIS TREATISE.

SOME there are, who, hearing the new birth to be so necessary to salvation, but never feeling in themselves any such change, have desired further helps. I advised them in the former treatise to be frequent in prayer, and hearing of the word: But so we have done, say they, and yet we feel no conversion. It may be so, for not always the doing of them, but perseverance in them, through Christ, obtains the blessing. I shall for their further satisfaction, give them a more particular method.

Two things necessary for them that would have part in the new birth, are, 1. To get into it. 2. To be delivered of it.

1. The means to get into it, are, 1. Examination of themselves. 2. Confession of their sins. 3. Hearty prayer for the softening of their hearts. By which are obtained the three first steps; sight of sin, sense of divine wrath, sorrow for sin.

2. The means to be delivered of it, is, by application of the promises; and these produce their several effects; as, a sight of Christ, a desire after Christ, a relying on Christ; and obedience to Christ.

CHAP. II.

The first Means to get into the New Birth.

1. THE means to get into the new birth, is, first, examination; and the way to examine, is to set before men that crystal-glass of the law for their light and rule: to this purpose I

have here annexed a catalogue; not that I can possibly enumerate all sins, but only the kinds; and if herein I come short, yet conscience may hereby bring into their thoughts those others not mentioned.

Now then, whosoever thou art that beginnest this blessed work, examine thyself by this catalogue, but do it warily, and truly; and where thou findest thyself guilty, either note it in this book, or transcribe it into some paper, that so they may be ready for thine eye when thou comest to confession.

II. SINS AGAINST THE FIRST COMMANDMENT.

In every commandment we must observe both the duties required, and sins forbidden, for both these are implied in every one of the commandments; if in the first thou art guilty, thou must answer negatively; if in the second, thou must answer affirmatively.

Now then to proceed:

"Thou shalt have no other Gods but me."

FOR THE DUTIES REQUIRED.—Say, first, Hast thou ever took the true God in Christ to be thy God? 2ndly, Hast thou abounded in those graces by which thou shouldst cleave unto God, as in knowledge, and love, and fear, and joy, and trusting in God? 3dly, Hast thou observed God's mercies, and promises, and works, and judgments upon thee, and, by a particular application, took special notice thereof? 4thly, Hast thou communicated with the godly, and joined thyself to God's people, and delighted chiefly in them?

FOR THE SINS FORBIDDEN.—Say, first, Hast thou not sometimes been guilty of blasphemy, or idolatry, or witchcraft, or atheism? 2ndly, Hast thou not been guilty of pride, a sin flatly opposing God, and first committed by devils? 3dly, Hast thou not inward reasonings that there is no God, or that he seeth not, or knoweth not, or that there is no profit in his service? 5thly, Hast thou not trusted in man, or feared man, or loved the world, and thereby alienated thy heart from God? 6thly, Hast thou not resorted to witches, or in the first place to physicians, and not to the living God? 7thly, Hast thou not tempted God, and in the matters of God been either cold, or lukewarm, or preposterously zealous? 8thly, Hast thou not been careless to perform the inward duties of God's worship in sincerity and truth? If in those thou hast transgressed, then hast thou broken this commandment.

III. SINS AGAINT THE SECOND COMMANDMENT.

"Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image."

FOR THE DUTIES REQUIRED.—Say, first, Hast thou ever worshipped the true God purely according to his will? 2ndly,

Hast thou observed all those outward duties of his worship as prayer, and vows, and fasting, and meditating, and the rest? 3dly, Hast thou repaired to God's house, observed family duties, received the preachers of the gospel?

For the Sins forbidden.—Say, first, Hast thou not sometimes walked after the imaginations of thy own heart, serving God out of custom? 2ndly, Hast thou not committed idol-worship, conceiving of God in thy mind in the likeness of a creature? 3dly, Hast thou not made an image to liken God to it, or used any gesture of love and reverence to any such images? Hast thou not been careless to worship God, to call upon the Lord, to receive God's ministers, or to perform any other of the outward duties of God's worship? If in any of these thou hast transgressed, then hast thou broken this commandment.

IV. Sins against the third commandment.

"*Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.*"

For the Duties required.—Say, first, Hast thou been a constant learner, hearer, and doer, of God's word and will? 2ndly, Hast thou prayed with perseverance, understanding, and power of the spirit, without doubting or wavering? 3dly, Hast thou come preparedly to the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and being come, hast thou discerned the Lord's body? 4thly, Hast thou used all the titles, and properties, and works, and ordinances, of the Lord with knowledge, faith, reverence, joy, and sincerity.

For the Sins forbidden.—Say, first, Hast thou not sometimes, in thy talk, dishonoured the titles, attributes, religion, word, people, of God, or any thing that hath in it the print of his holiness? 2ndly, Hast thou not caused the name of religion, or people of God, to be ill thought of by thy ill course of life? 3rdly, Hast thou not rashly, or unpreparedly, or heedlessly, read the word, heard sermons, received the sacraments, or performed any other part of the worship of God? 4thly, Hast thou not thought or spoken blasphemously, or contemptuously, of God, or of any thing whatsoever pertaining to God? If in any of these thou hast transgressed, then hast thou broken this commandment.

V. Sins against the fourth commandment.

"*Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath-day.*"

For the Duties required.—Say, first, Hast thou, according to the equity of this commandment, ever observed the Lord's day, and other days and times set apart for God's service? 2ndly, Hast thou always prepared thy heart, before thou wentest into the house of the Lord, by meditation of God's word and

works, by examination and reformation of thy ways, by prayer, thanksgiving, and holy resolution to carry thyself as in God's presence, and to hear and obey whatsoever thou shouldst learn out of the pure word of God? Hast thou repaired to God's house in due time, and stayed the whole time of prayer, reading, preaching of the word, singing of psalms, receiving of the sacraments? Hast thou performed private religious offices upon the Lord's day; in private prayer and thanksgiving, in acknowledging thy offences to God, in reconciling thyself to those thou hast offended, or with whom thou art at variance; in visiting the sick, comforting the afflicted, contributing to the necessity of the poor, instructing thy children and servants, and the rest of thy family, in the fear and nurture of the Lord?

For the Sins forbidden.—Say, first, Hast thou not sometimes spent the Lord's day in idleness, or in worldly business, in vanities, or in sin? 2ndly, Hast thou not omitted public duties, or camest in too late, or wentest out too soon? 3dly, Hast thou not employed thy cattle, or servants, or children, or any other, though thou workedst not thyself? Hast thou not profaned the Lord's day, by needless works, words, or thoughts, about thy calling, or about thy recreation? Hath not the strict observance of the duties of that day been tedious unto thee, saying in thine heart, When will the day be gone? If in any of these thou hast transgressed, then hast thou broken this commandment.

VI. Sins against the fifth commandment

"Honour thy father and thy mother."

For the Duties here required: they are either in the family, commonwealth, or church.

First, for the family: Say, if thou art an husband: 1. Hast thou loved thy wife, and dealt with her according to knowledge, giving honour to her as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life? If thou art a wife: 2. Hast thou submitted to thine own husband, as unto the Lord, in every thing? 3. Hast thou put on the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit? If thou art a parent: 4. Hast thou brought up thy children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? 5. Hast thou corrected them, yet not provoked them by immoderate correction? 6. Hast thou provided for them in their callings, or outward estates? If thou art a child: 7. Hast thou obeyed thy parents, and received correction with submission and reverence? 8. Hast thou relieved them in their wants? 9. Hast thou observed their instructions, and covered their infirmities? If thou art a master: 10. Hast thou entertained God's servants, and given unto thy servant that which is just and equal? If thou art a servant: 11. Hast thou been obe-

dient to thy master according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ; not answering again, not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity?

Secondly, for the commonweath; if thou art a magistrate: 12. Hast thou executed just laws? 13. Hast thou reformed others' abuses, according to the power that is in thee? If thou art a subject: 14. Hast thou obeyed the higher powers in all just commands? 15. Hast thou been subject unto them, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake?

Thirdly, for the church; if thou art a minister: 16. Hast thou taught in season, and out of season? 17. Hath thy light shined before men, that they might see thy good works? If thou art an hearer: 18. Hast thou communicated to them that teach thee in all good things? 19. Hast thou obeyed them, and prayed for them, and loved them, and followed them, considering the end of their conversation?

For the Sins forbidden.—And first, for the family; say, if thou art an husband: 1. Hast thou not sometimes abused thy wife, or injured her in thought, word, or deed? If thou art a wife: 2. Hast thou not been wasteful, or froward, or idle? If thou art a parent: 3. Hast thou not been careless, especially of thy children's souls? If thou art a child: 4. Hast thou not despised thy father's or mother's instructions? 5. Hast thou not mocked them, or shamed them, or grieved them? If thou art a master: 6. Hast thou not governed thy family negligently? 7. Hast thou not withheld that which is just and equal in diet, wages, encouragement? If thou art a servant: 8. Hast thou not been idle and slothful? 9. Hast thou not served grudgingly, and not from the heart?

Secondly, for the commonwealth; if thou art a magistrate: 10. Hast thou not been as a lion, or a bear, roaring and raging over the poor? 11. Hast thou not decreed unrighteous decrees, respecting the persons of the poor, or honouring the persons of the mighty? If thou art a subject: 12. Hast thou not reviled the gods, or cursed the rulers of thy people? 13. Hast thou not disobeyed the higher powers, or denied tribute, or custom, or honour, or fear, to whom they are due?

Thirdly, for the church; if thou art a minister: 14. Hast thou not been profane in thy life and conversation? 15. Hast thou not run before thou wast sent? or being sent, hast thou not been negligent in the gift that is in thee? 16. Hast thou not caused God's people to err? 17. Hast thou not committed simony, or sought indirectly for the fleece, not regarding the flock? 18. Hast thou no tstrengthened the hands of evil-doers, in preaching peace to wicked men? 19. Hast thou not given heed to fables, or to some unprofitable matter, rather than godly edifying? If thou art an hearer: 20. Hast thou not resisted the minister, and the word preached by him? What-

soever thou art, husband, or wife, or parent, or child, or master, or servant, or magistrate, or subject, or minister, or hearer, if in any of these thou hast transgressed, then thou hast broken this commandment.

VII. SINS AGAINST THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT.

"Thou shalt do no murder."

THE DUTIES REQUIRED.—Say, Hast thou ever desired and studied, by all lawful means to preserve thine own person, and the person of thy neighbour?

FOR THE SINS FORBIDDEN.—Say, first, Hast thou not sometimes envied others? 2ndly, Hast thou not offended others in words, by censuring, or reviling, or rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing? 3dly, Hast thou not offended others in deeds, plotting against the just, or doing evil to any man? 4thly, Hast thou not been angry with thy brother without cause, or continued long in anger? 5thly, Hast thou not rejoiced at others' fall? or wished a curse to their souls? 6thly, Hast thou not done evil to thyself, by inordinate fretting, or grieving, or drinking, or saying in thy passions, would to God I were dead? 7thly, Hast thou not been a sower of discord, or some way or other an occasion of the discomfort, or the death, of thy neighbour? If in any of these thou hast transgressed, thou hast then broken this commandment.

VIII. SINS AGAINST THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.

"Thou shalt not commit adultery."

FOR THE DUTIES REQUIRED.—Say, Hast thou ever kept thyself pure in soul and body, both towards thyself and others?

FOR THE SINS FORBIDDEN.—Say, first, Hast thou not sometimes been defiled with whoredom, adultery, polygamy, or self-pollution? 2ndly, Hast thou not offended in the occasions of uncleanness, as in idleness, gluttony, drunkenness, wanton company, or gay attire? 3dly, Hast thou not sinned in thy senses, or gestures, or words? 4thly, Hast thou not harboured in thy heart impure thoughts, inordinate affections? 5thly, Hast thou not behaved thyself immodestly, using some manner of dalliance and wantonness? If in any of these thou hast transgressed, then hast thou broken this commandment.

IX. SINS AGAINST THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT.

"Thou shalt not steal."

FOR THE DUTIES REQUIRED.—Say, Hast thou, by all good means, furthered the outward estate of thyself and of thy neighbour?

FOR THE SINS FORBIDDEN.—Say, first, Hast thou not sometimes got thy living by an unlawful calling? 2ndly, Hast

thou not impoverished thyself by idleness, or unnecessary expenses? 3dly, Hast thou not withheld from thyself, or others, that which should have been expended? 4thly, Hast thou not gotten or kept thy neighbour's goods by falsehood or force, and made no restitution? 5thly, Hast thou not stolen by usury, or oppression, or fraud in buying or selling? 6thly, Hast thou not robbed God of his tithes and offerings? 7thly, Hast thou not some way or other impaired thy neighbour's estate? If in any of these thou hast transgressed, then hast thou broken this commandment.

X. SINS AGAINST THE NINTH COMMANDMENT.

"Thou shalt not bear false witness."

FOR THE DUTIES REQUIRED.—Say, Hast thou ever by all means sought to maintain thy own and thy neighbour's good name, according to truth and a good conscience?

FOR THE SINS FORBIDDEN.—Say, first, Hast thou not sometimes loved, or made, a lie? 2ndly, Hast thou not raised a false report? 3dly, Hast thou not censured or judged others? 4thly, Hast thou not flattered thyself and others, saying unto the wicked, thou art righteous? 5thly, Hast thou not condemned some without witness, or forborne to witness for others when thou knewest the truth? 6thly, Hast thou not been uncharitably suspicious, or a despiser of thy neighbour? 7thly, Hast thou not told a lie, whether jestingly, or officiously, or perniciously? If in any of these thou hast transgressed, then hast thou broken this commandment.

XI. SINS AGAINST THE LAST COMMANDMENT.

"Thou shalt not covet."

FOR THE DUTIES REQUIRED.—Say, first, Hast thou ever been truly contented with thy own outward condition? 2ndly, Hast thou rejoiced at others' good, and loved thy neighbour as thyself?

FOR THE SINS FORBIDDEN.—Say, first, Hast thou not sometimes conceived evil thoughts in thy heart? 2ndly, Hast thou not been discontented with thy own condition? Hast thou not coveted after something or other that was thy neighbour's? If in any of these thou hast transgressed, then hast thou broken this commandment.

CHAP. III.

The second Means to get into the New Birth

AFTER examination, which may serve thee for one day's work or two, the next duty is, confession. Take a catalogue of

those sins which thou hast noted, and spread thy catalogue before the Lord; there read thou seriously, and particularly, saying, O Lord, I confess I have committed this sin, and the other sin, (as they are before thee in order,) of all these sins I am guilty, especially of those sins wherein I delighted, my darlings, my bosom-sins, (take notice of them, and confess them again,) of all these sins I am guilty; and now, O Lord, standing, as it were, at the bar of thy tribunal, I arraign myself, and accuse myself, and judge myself worthy of the utmost of thy wrath and indignation: for one sin thou castedst Adam out of paradise, for one sin thou castedst the angels out of heaven, and what then shall become of me, that have committed a world of sins?—(Here pause a while, and meditate on thy unworthiness.)—O that I should be so foolish, so brutish, so mad, to commit these sins, these manifold sins! O that by these sins I should break so holy a law, provoke so good and great a majesty? What should I do, but, remembering my evil ways, even loathe myself in my own sight, yea abhor myself in dust and ashes, for my iniquities and my abominations? For conclusion, thou mayest imitate the publican, who, not daring to lift up his eyes, smote his breast: So do thou, and say with him, *God be merciful to me a sinner.*

CHAP. IV.

The third Means to get into the New Birth.

After confession, which may well serve thee for another day's work, seek for true sorrow and mourning for thy sins: seek thou must, and never leave seeking, till thou feel thy heart melt within thee. To this purpose read some tracts of death, of judgment, of hell, of Christ's passion, of the joys of heaven; last of all, and I take it best of all, resolve to set every day some time apart to beg it of the Lord: and at the time appointed fall down on thy knees, spread thy catalogue, confess, accuse, judge, condemn thyself again; which done, beg of the Lord to give thee that soft heart he promised, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. *A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.* Say then to thyself, is this the Lord's promise? O Lord, perform it to my heart; take away my stony heart, and give me a heart of flesh, a new heart, a new spirit, &c.—(Here make thine own prayer: be not careful of words, only let the words be the true voice of thy heart.)—Pray, and call, and cry, with vehemency and fervency not to be uttered. When thou hast done, if the Lord do not yet hear thee, pray again the next day, and the

next day, yea, put on this resolution, that thou wilt never leave praying till the Lord hear thee in mercy, till he make thee to feel thy heart melt within thee, yea, if it may be, llit thou seest thy tears trickling down thy cheeks, because of thy offences. The Lord will, perhaps, hear thee at the first time, or at the second time, or, if he do not, be not discouraged, God hath his times; God speaketh once and twice, and man perceiveth not; happy he who relenteth at last; give it not over, persist thou, thy suit is just, and importunity will prevail.

2. *The first Reason for this Sorrow.*—This must be done; first, because "without pangs no birth: the pangs of a penitent man are as the pangs of a woman. Now as there can be no birth without pains of travail going before, so neither true repentance without some terrors of the law, and straits of conscience. *Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear,* saith the apostle to the Romans; to shew us they once did receive it. When? but in the very first preparation to conversion: then it was that the Spirit of God in the law did so bear witness unto them of their bondage, that it made them to fear. And certainly thus it is with every man in his first conversion; his contrition must be vehement, bruising, breaking, rending the heart, and feeling the throes, as a woman labouring of child, before there can be a new birth.

3. *The second Reason for this Sorrow.*—Again, without contrition, no Christ; "therefore it was that John Baptist," saith Chrysostom, "first thoroughly frighted the minds of his hearers with the terror of judgment, and expectation of torment, and when he had thus taken down the stubbornness, then, at length, he makes mention of Christ." Certainly, the first thing that draws to Christ, is to consider our miserable state without him; no man will come to Christ, except he be hungry; no man will take Christ's yoke upon him, till he come to know the weight of Satan's yoke: to this end, therefore, must every man be broken with lashes of conscience, that so despairing of himself, he may fly unto Christ.

4. *The third Reason for this Sorrow.*—Again, without hearty sorrow, no spiritual comfort. We must first be humbled before the Lord, and then he will lift us up. God pours not the oil of his mercy, save into a broken vessel; God never comforts thoroughly, save where he finds humiliation and repentance for sin. "The word of God," saith one, "hath three degrees of operation in the hearts of his chosen; first, it falleth to men's ears as the sound of many waters, a mighty, a great and confused sound, and which commonly bringeth neither terror nor joy, but a wondering and acknowledgment of a strange force; this is that which many felt, hearing Christ, when they were astonished at his doctrine. The next effect is, the voice of thunder, which bringeth not only wonder, but

tear also; not only filleth the ears with sound, and the hear with astonishment, but moreover shaketh and terrifieth the conscience. The third effect is, the sound of harping, while the word not only ravisheth with admiration, and striketh the conscience with terror, but also, lastly, filleth it with sweet peace and joy. Now albeit the two first degrees may be without the last, yet none feel the last, who have not in some degree felt both the first." He saith true, in some degree, though commonly the deeper the sense of misery, the sweeter is the sense of mercy.

CHAP. V.

The Means to be delivered out of the Pangs of the New Birth.

1. And now, if, by God's blessing, thou feelest this sorrow and melting of heart, the next thing thou must do, is to seek for the remedy, which remedy consists of these ingredients: first, A sight of Christ. 2ndly, A desire after Christ. 3dly, A relying on Christ. 4thly, An obedience to Christ. 5thly, A comfort in Christ, sought for and obtained. Thou wilt say, these ingredients are pearls indeed, but how should I obtain them? I answer, by application of the promises; and since every ingredient hath its particular promises, I shall let thee see them in order, only do thou apply them thyself: some may object, I dare not look to the promise, I cannot believe; if I could believe, then I could expect good from the promise.—I answer, thou shalt never believe upon these terms; thou must not first have faith, then go to the promise, and from thence receive power to believe. O then go to the promise, and expect faith from thence; this is the rule, "I must not bring faith to the promise, but to receive faith from it, and therefore there will I hang, and wait till the Lord please to work it."

2. *The Promises procuring a Sight of Christ.*

The first step that brings comfort to thy heavy soul, is the sight of Christ: and to procure this sight, thou hast these promises.

Matt. i. 21. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."

John i. 29. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world."

John iii. 16. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in him should not perish, but have life everlasting."

Rom. iii. 25. "God hath set forth Christ Jesus, to be reconciliation through faith in his blood."

1 *Cor.* i. 30. "Christ Jesus, of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

1 *Tim.* i. 15. "This is a true saying, and by all men worthy to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

1 *John* ii. 1, 2. "If any sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

All these tell thee, that as thou art a sinner, so thou hast a Saviour; only do thou apply them, and certainly they will help thee in the first step of this remedy, to wit, the sight of Christ.

3. *The Promises procuring a Desire after Christ.*

Thou mayest say, I see Christ, and I see that his person, and death, and blood-shed, are precious and saving; but how may I make him mine? how may I know that he is my Saviour? I answer, Thou must hunger and thirst after him; this desire is the second step: and to provoke thee to this duty, consider these promises:

Isa. lv. 1. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price."

John vii. 37, 38. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink: he that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

Rev. xxii. 17. "Let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

These may provoke thee to thirst after Christ, that sovereign fountain, opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.

4. *The Promises procuring a Relying on Christ.*

Yet thou mayest say, I thirst indeed, but I dare not drink; I desire, but I dare not come near, to lay hold on Christ; I am a most vile, unworthy wretch, and my sins are of a scarlet dye. True; for thee to pretend part in Christ, wallowing yet in thy sins! for thee to believe that Christ is thy righteousness, purposing to go on in any one known sin, were a most cursed, horrible presumption indeed! But where all is a burden, there a man may be bold. A man may? Yes, he must: if thou groanest under sin, if thou longest after Christ, apply these promises, and they will force thee to lay hold upon the Rock, to take Christ for thine own, to throw thy sinful soul upon his bleeding wounds, and to cast thyself with confidence into the bosom of his love:—

Matt. xi. 28. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Isa. lv. 1. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, yea come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price." And lest thou say, I am so far from bringing any thing in my hand, that I bring a world of wickedness in my heart, and my sins, I fear, will hinder my acceptation; No, saith he:—

Isa. lv. 7. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, [and this is thy desire, thy case] and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him," &c. If all this will not do without a more solemn invitation, see how the Lord of heaven sends forth his ambassadors to entreat thee to come in:—

2 *Cor.* v. 20. "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled unto God." Or if he cannot woo thee, lo, he commands thee:—

1 *John* iii. 23. "And this is the commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ." Or yet to drive thee to Christ, he not only commands, but threatens:—

Heb. iii. 18. "And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?"

How is it possible, but that all, or some of these, should bring in every broken heart to believe, and every one that is weary of his sins, to rely upon the Lord of life for everlasting welfare?

5. *The Promises procuring Obedience to Christ.*

And yet thou mayest say, I have cast myself on Christ; is this all I must do? No, there is yet another step; he is not only to be thy Saviour, but thy husband; thou must love him, and serve him, and honour him, and obey him; thou must endeavour not only for pardon of sin, and salvation from hell, but for purity, obedience, ability to do or suffer any thing for Christ. And to provoke thee to this duty, consider these texts:—

Jer. xxxi. 33. "This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

Matt. vii. 21. "Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

Matt. xi. 29. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

Matt. xvi. 24. "If any man will follow me, let him take up his cross and follow me."

2 *Cor.* v. 15. "He died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them."

1 *John* i. 6, 7. "If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another; and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

1 *John* ii. 5, 6. "He that keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith, he abideth in him, ought himself also to walk, even as he walked."

1 *John* iii. 6, 9. "Whosoever abideth in him, sinneth not.—Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

All these may invite thee to enter into the holy path, and to fight under Christ's banner, against the world, the flesh, and the devil, unto thy life's end.

DIRECTIONS TO A MAN IN THE ACT OF THE NEW BIRTH.

THE OCCASION OF THIS TREATISE.

Hitherto I have given the doctrine of the new birth; yet one thing is wanting, to wit, the practice of some saint in this one necessary thing: and what man hath writ more on this subject, than T. Hooker? Therefore I thought fit, not only to contract his books in this appendix; but also, to set before you those pathetic expressions of his soul-pangs in the new-birth, as matter for your imitation.

CHAP. I.

The Soul's Preparation.

Before the soul can share in Christ's merits, (to speak in the author's language, without any alteration,) two things are required:

1. A preparation to receive Christ.
2. An implantation of the soul into Christ.

That there must be a preparation, is the first ground we lay; and herein observe we, the matter, the manner, and the means, of this preparation.

1. For matter: the soul of a sinner must be prepared for Christ, before he can entertain him. When kings go to any place, they send, to make readiness, their harbingers before them: if Christ, the King of saints, come into a soul, there must be a preparation before he enter; and good reason, for he

is not a mere man, an ordinary person, but a King, a King of glory.

2. The manner of this preparation consists in these three passages: 1st, the soul breaks that league which formerly it had with corruptions: 2ndly, the soul is willing to give way to Christ Jesus, and to let him overthrow whatsoever shall oppose him: 3dly, the soul is content that God should rule all, not only the eye, or hand, or tongue, or heart, but the whole man; it opens all the gates, and desires Christ to come and take all the keys of the house upon him.

3. The means of this preparation is the powerful ministry, which God hath appointed for this work; and it is discovered in three particulars: 1st, in a particular application of the truth to the souls of men. 2ndly, in a confirmation of the truth by soundness of argument, and plain evidence of scriptures. 3dly, in a kind of spiritual heat in the heart and affections of the minister, answerable to that which he communicates to the people

If any soul that hath enjoyed these means any while, is not yet fitted and prepared, it is a fearful sign; the state of that soul is extremely dangerous. Go home, then, if there be any such, and plead, saying, "Lord, why am I not yet humbled and prepared? Will exhortations never prevail with me? Will terrors and reproofs never break my heart into pieces? I have heard sermons that would have shaken the very stones; the fire of hell hath flashed in my face; and if any thing can do me any good, why not these exhortations, admonitions, and reproofs?" The Lord turn the heart of such a poor sinner, that he may lay hold on mercy in due time.

CHAP. II.

The general Circumstances of Preparation on God's part.

1. In this preparation, two things are considerable; the general circumstances, and the substantial parts.

The general circumstances are, some on God's part, some on man's part.

On God's part there are these. 1. The offer of Christ and grace. 2. The condition of this offer. 3. The easiness of this condition.

On man's part, two things are considerable:—1. That corruption doth oppose this grace. 2. That God will remove this corruption.

The first general circumstance of the soul's preparation, is on God's part; wherein is the offer of Christ Jesus, the condition of this offer, and the easiness of this offer. We may have all in this one comparison: As with a malefactor convicted of

high treason, if, after the discovery of all passages, the king make a proclamation, that upon the surceasing of his enterprises, he shall be pardoned; nay, if the king shall send message after message, to tell him, that would he yet lay down his arms, and take a pardon, he shall be graciously accepted: if this traitor now should rather fling away his pardon than his weapons, then should the king raise an army and overcome him, and take him, and execute him without any mercy; I appeal to your own consciences, is he not justly rewarded? Why, this is the condition of every poor soul under heaven; we are all rebels and traitors; and yet, after all our pride and stubbornness, the Lord is pleased to proclaim mercy still to every one that will receive it: "All you that have dishonoured my name, all you that have profaned my sabbaths, and contemned my ordinances, all ye cursed wretches, come; come who will, and take pardon;" therein is the offer: only let them lay aside all their weapons; therein is the condition: and then have Christ for the taking; therein is the easiness of the condition.

Blessed God, may every soul say, if I will not do this for Christ, I will do nothing: had the Lord required a greater matter of me to have attained salvation; had he required thousands of rams, and ten thousand rivers of oil; had he required the first-born of my body for the sin of my soul; one drop of mercy at the last gasp would have quit all this cost: but what goodness is this, that the Lord should require nothing of me, but to lay down my weapons, and to receive Christ offered!

Lo, the Lord hath this day sent from heaven, and offered salvation unto you sons of men; the Lord Jesus is become a suitor to you, and I am Christ's spokesman. Shall the Lord and his messengers thus woo and entreat? and will any yet stand out against God, and say, "I will none of Christ, I will try it out to the last." O then, if the great God of heaven and earth shall come with ten thousand thousand of judgments, and execute them upon that man! If he shall bring a whole legion of devils, and say, "Take him, devils, and torment him in hell for ever, because he would not have mercy when it was offered, he shall not have mercy." If God should thus deal with that man, the Lord should be just in so doing.

II. The general circumstances of the preparation on man's part.—The second general circumstance of the soul's preparation, is on man's part; and herein is observable,

1. That corruption opposeth grace.
2. That God will remove this corruption.

The first is clear, 1 Cor. ii. 14. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them." Give us a man in the state of nature—and though all the ministers under heaven should preach mercy unto him; though

all the angels in heaven should exhort and entreat him; though all glory and happiness were laid before him, and he were wished only to believe and take it, and it should be his for ever; yet in his natural condition he could have no power to receive so blessed an offer; howsoever, this hinders not but he is to wait upon God in the means. And then,

Secondly, God may remove this corruption, which he himself cannot do: herein observe we, first, the author; and secondly, the time, of this grace

First, the author is God; *I will take away their stony heart,* saith God, *and give them an heart of flesh.* The taking away of the indisposition of the soul to any duty, and the fitting and disposing it to perform any spiritual service, is the alone work of God.

Quiet then thy soul: thou mayest say, "I have an hard heart, and it will receive no good; the word prevails not, the sacraments have no power over me; all the means, and cost, and charges, that God hath bestowed upon me, is lost, and my heart is not yet humbled, my corruptions are not yet weakened." But in this be thou comforted; though means cannot do it, yet the Lord can do it, there is nothing difficult to him.

Be then exhorted, you that have stony hearts, to have recourse unto this great God of heaven. You wives that have husbands with stony hearts, and you parents that have children with stony hearts, tell them you have heard this day of a physician that will cure them, and exhort them to repair unto him.

Secondly, the time of this grace, is either in regard of the means, or the men.

1. In regard of the means; and that is, when the sons of men have the gospel shining in their faces; if ever God work upon their hearts, it will be then.

This should teach us how thankful we ought to be unto the Lord, that enjoy these liberties in the land of the living. That a man was born in such a time, in such a place, wherein the way of life and salvation is so fully, so plainly, and so powerfully made known, that the sun of the gospel shines full in his face. O how thankful should he be!

And for those that neglect the means of their salvation, how should we pity them! Methinks I see a poor creature, that slighted mercy and salvation when it was offered him, lying upon his death-bed; light is departing from his eyes, and his soul is departing from his body; methinks I hear such a man say at his last gasp, "The day is gone, the gate is shut, and now it is too late to enter:" and thus the soul departs from his body, the body to the grave, and the soul to hell. Oh, what bitter lamentations will that soul make in hell! "Oh, the golden time that I have seen, and not regarded! Oh, the gracious opportunities of salvation that my eyes have beheld,

and yet I neglected! Oh, the mercy and grace, and goodness of God, that have been offered unto me! All these I have contemned, and trampled under my feet, and therefore now must I be tormented with the devil and his angels, from everlasting to everlasting." Now the Lord give us hearts to take notice of these things. If I were now breathing out my last breath, I would breathe out this legacy to all surviving Christians, *This is the accepted time, this is the day of salvation.*

2. In regard of the men, on whom God works; that is to say, on some in their tender age, on some in their ripe age, on some in their old age. But however the Lord doth at several times convert several of his servants, yet most, and most usually, before their old age.

O let this provoke us, that while the flower is in prime, we would use all means for our good; let us now, in the summer of our days, improve ourselves in good works, so that when the harvest comes, we may be gathered into God's barn. Oh! would we be exhorted to take the best time and opportunity of salvation, then might we receive the fruits of our labours, the salvation of our souls.

CHAP. III.

The Substantial Parts of Preparation on God's Part.

HITHERTO of the general circumstances of the soul's preparing for Christ. The substantial parts of this preparation are generally two: the dispensation of God's work on the soul, and the disposition of the soul by God's work.

The dispensation of God's work discovers itself in drawing the soul, from sin, to himself.

But because these two are made up by one action and motion, we shall therefore handle them together: and the sum is this, that God *by an holy kind of violence* (which is called *drawing*, John vi. 44.) *doth pluck the soul from those sins that harbour in it, unto himself:* wherein we may consider two things;

1. What the nature of his drawing is.
2. The means whereby God draws.

First, For the nature of this drawing; it is of a double kind:

1. There is a moral drawing, when by reasons propounded, and good things offered, to the understanding and will, a man comes to have his mind enlightened, and his will moved; thus was it with Paul, when he was *constrained by Lydia to abide in her house*, Acts xvi. 15. 2. There is a phisical drawing, when the Lord is pleased to put a new power into the soul of a sinner, and withal to carry the will to the object propounded; when the Lord not only offers good things to the soul, but enables the soul to lay hold on the things offered: and thus the Lord draws a sinner from sin unto himself.

Secondly, For the means whereby he draws; they are these four:

First, the Lord lets in a light into the soul of a poor sinner, and discovers unto him that he is in a wrong way: this the soul marvels at, because usually it comes on a sudden, the sinner perceiving nothing less.

Secondly, though a man would defeat the power of this light, yet God still follows it with forcible arguments, and draws with the cord of his mercy; *I taught Ephraim to go,* saith God, *taking him by the arms; I drew them by the cords of love, and with the bands of a man.* This love is made up of four cords:

1. The Lord reveals himself to be ready to receive, and willing and easy to entertain, sinners when they come to him: *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and unto our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* The word in the original is, *he will multiply pardons.* Hast thou *multiplied rebellions?* the Lord will also *multiply pardons;* the bowels of compassion are still open, and the arms of mercy are still spread abroad; his pardons are multiplied; there is yet mercy for thee also, and for a thousand thousand more.

2. The Lord is not only ready to forgive when men come to him, but that they may come, he also calls and commands them. "O, but may I," saith a poor sinner, "shall I, dare I, go unto the Lord God for mercy? May I be so bold to press in for favour at the hands of the Lord? I have been a grievous sinner, and have heaped abomination upon abomination; I am afraid, therefore, to approach near unto the Lord's presence." Is it so? Hear what the Lord saith: "Come unto me, ye rebellious people, and I will heal your rebellions. You that never prayed, never came to hear, all rebels, come unto me." And then the people answer, *Behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.* This is great encouragement to a poor sinner; he begins now to wonder, and say, "Lord, shall all my sins be pardoned? Shall all my abominations be forgiven? I that slighted so many mercies, and committed so many follies, shall I be entertained?" "Yes," saith the Lord, "Come unto me, and thou shalt be forgiven. Come; I command you come."

3. The Lord doth not only command a poor sinner to come, but when he says, "There is mercy with God, but not for me:" the Lord followeth him still, and sends another cord after him, that if it be possible, he may win him, and woo him to receive mercy. If command therefore prevail not, he entreats and beseeches him to come and receive mercy; and this, methinks, should move the hardest heart under heaven. *We,* saith the apostle, *are ambassadors from Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God.* Rather than you should go away from Christ, even

mercy itself will come and kneel down before you, and beseech and entreat you, "for the Lord Jesus's sake, to pity your poor souls, and receive pardon for your sins;" a sinner is not able to comprehend this, but he begins to be at a stand:—"What, that the Lord should beseech him? Oh, that thou wouldst receive pardon for thy sins, and be blessed for ever! Good Lord!" saith the soul, "is this possible, that the great King of heaven should come and beseech such a traitor, such a rebel as I am, to take pardon? That a king on earth should proclaim a pardon to some notorious traitor, this were much; but that the King of heaven should lay down his crown, and beseech me, on his knees as it were, to take mercy; this is a thing beyond all expectation. What, shall heaven stoop to earth? Shall majesty stoop to misery? Shall the great God of heaven and earth, that might have condemned my soul, and if I had perished and been damned, might have took glory by my destruction: is it possible that this God should not only entertain me when I come, and command me to come, but entreat and beseech me to come, and receive mercy from him! Oh, the depth of the incomprehensible love of God!" Imagine you saw God the Father entreating you, and God the Son beseeching you, as he doth this day, "Come now, and forsake your sins, and take mercy, which is prepared for you, and shall be bestowed upon you;" would not this make a soul think thus with itself, "What, for a rebel? Not only to have mercy offered, but to be entreated to receive mercy, it were pity, if I will not take it, but I should go to hell, and be damned for ever." The Lord, he complains, *Why will ye die? As I live, saith the Lord, I desire not the death of a sinner: turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?* "Mercy is offered ye, the Lord reacheth out his hand to you;" fain would he pluck the drunkard out of the alehouse, and the adulterer from his whore. Oh! if you break this cord, I know not what to say to you: this is able to break mountains in pieces;—*Shake, O mountains,* saith the prophet; why? *because God hath redeemed Jacob:* the redemption of Jacob was enough to break a mountain; let his mercy break our hearts; it is God that begs, the blessing is our own.

4. If yet this prevail nothing at all, the Lord will then wait, and stay in long patience and suffering, to see if at any time a sinner will turn unto him. Our Saviour follows poor sinners from alehouse to alsehouse, and says, "I beseech you, drunkards, take mercy, and have your sins pardoned." The Lord, as we may say, wearieth himself with waiting, one day after another, and one week after another: "It may be," saith Christ, "this week, this sabbath, this sermon, a sinner will turn unto me: what, will it never be?" Are you not ashamed, my friends, that the Lord Jesus should thus wait your leisure, and follow you from place to place; nay, that Christ should every morn-

ing appear to your understanding, and every night come to your bedside, saying, "Let this be the last night of sinning, and the next day the first day of repentance: Oh! when will you be humbled? When will you receive mercy, that it may go well with you, and with your's for ever?' If none of the other will move you, yet, for shame, let this cord draw you to the Lord: hear his pangs; *O Jerusalem, will thou not be made clean? Oh! when will it once be?* A woman that is in travail, Oh, how she expects and longs for her delivery! now a throb comes, and then she cries; anon comes a second throb, and then she cries again; Oh! when comes deliverance? Thus God the Father takes on him the person of a travailing woman; he travails and travails until he bring forth a son, until some soul be converted, and brought home unto him; *O Jerusalem, wilt thou not be made clean? When will it once be?* "I have waited; one, ten, twenty, thirty, forty years long, have I waited on this generation; when will it once be?" The Lord thus travails in patience, looking when we will receive mercy. Will our proud hearts never be humbled? Will our stubborn hearts never be softened? Will our profane hearts never be sanctified? When will it once be? Christ hath waited this day, this week, this month, this quarter, this year, these ten, twenty, thirty, forty years, on us: you old sinners, that are grey-headed in your wickedness, how long hath the Lord waited on you? Oh! for shame, let him wait no longer, but turn, turn ye unto him, that ye may receive mercy from him.

Thirdly, if bonds of love move not, the Lord hath iron cords, that will pluck in pieces; to wit, the cords of conscience; which thus disputes, "He that being oftened reproved, doth still harden his hearts, shall perish everlastingly." But thou, being often reproved, doth still harden thy heart; therefore, thou shalt perish everlastingly.

In the first proposition, conscience gives the sinner a monition, to come from sin upon pain of the heaviest judgment that can be inflicted. It is the Lord that sends the conscience on this errand, "Go to such a man, and tell him, You have spoken against God's saints, and you have broken God's sabbaths, and you have contemned God's ordinances:"—"Be it known unto thee, saith the conscience, that I have a command from heaven, and from God; I charge you, as you will answer at the dreadful day of judgment; take heed of those evils that heretofore you have committed, lest you damn you souls for ever." Will you question his commission? See Prov. xxix. 1. *He that being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed.* If you are often reproved, and will not be bettered, then the Lord says, and conscience from the Lord tells you, "Be it at your own peril, ye shall suddenly be destroyed." No sooner conscience thus speaks, but the sinner hangs the wing, and with-

draws himself from his former lewd courses. But now when wicked persons see their companion is gone, they make after him amain, and then conscience plucks one way, and they pluck another way; at last by carnal company, and cursed persuasions, the soul is drawn back again to its former courses, and so perhaps this twist is broken, and the sinner is gone.

2. If so, conscience, that was a monitor, now turns accuser; before it was only God's herald, to forewarn him, but it is become a sergeant to arrest him: it follows him to the alehouse, and pursues him home; then takes him in his bed, and arrests him in his sleep; there, by a meditation, it hales the soul before the tribunal of God, saying, "Lo, Lord, this is the man, this is the drunkard, the adulterer, blasphemer, this is he, Lord; an enemy to thy servants, an hater of thy truth, a despiser of thy ordinances: at such a time, in such a place, with such a company, this man despised thy truth; this is he, Lord, this is the man." And when conscience hath thus dragged him before God, and accused him, then, "Take him, jailor; take him, devil," saith the Lord, "and imprison him; let vexation, and horror, and trouble, and anguish, lie upon his soul, until he confess his sins, and resolve to forsake them."

In this case was David, when he was forced to say, *My bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long; for day and night thy hand was heavy upon me, my moisture is turned into the drought of summer: then,* said David, *I acknowledged my sin unto thee; I confessed my transgressions unto thee, O Lord, and so thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.* David folded up his sins at the first, and therefore his bones were consumed, and he roared continually; and when the Lord had him on the rack, he made him roar again, and would never leave tormenting, till David came to confessing; but when he confessed his sin, then the Lord forgave him the iniquity of it. Thus conscience brings the soul of a sinner on the rack, (as traitors are used that will not confess otherwise,) and makes him confess his sins; and then he cries, "Oh! the abominations I have committed, which the sun never saw; in such a place, at such a time." Thus conscience receives some satisfaction, and begins to be quiet; and now, having got some quiet, his cursed companions set upon him again, he listens again, and then he begins to follow his old sins, perhaps with more eagerness than ever, and now is another twist broken.

3. If so, conscience, that was a monitor and accuser, turns executioner. The first proposition admonished, the second accused; if neither of these prevail, then conscience concludes, Thou must to execution, thou shalt perish everlastingly. And now conscience cries, Monitions or accusations could not prevail with this man; come, ye damned ghosts, and take away this drunkard, this blasphemer, this adulterer, and throw him

headlong into the pit of hell; he would not be amended, let him be condemned; he would not be humbled, therefore let him be damned." The man hearing this, is amazed, and thinks himself past hope, past help, past cure: did you ever see or hear a tormented conscience in these pangs? He cries, "Lo there devils stand; the heavens frown; God is incensed; hell's mouth is opened!" and now a minister is sent for, who displays to this despairing soul, the mercy and grace of God in Christ Jesus: "Oh," replies he, "this is my bane, my damnation. If I had never heard of mercy, if I had never lived under the gospel and the means of salvation, then had I been an happy man; alas! it is mercy I have neglected, it is salvation I have contemned, how then should I be saved? O the persuasions of the Lord that I have had! the Lord hath even wept over me, as he did over Jerusalem, *Oh that thou hadst known the things belonging to thy peace!* yet all these persuasions have I contemned, and therefore certainly to hell I must go." The minister replies, Truth it is, you have done thus, but would you do so still? Is it good now to be drunk, or to blaspheme, or to rail on God's saints, or contemn God's ordinances? "O, no, no," saith he, "I now find what the end of these wicked courses will be; God's word could not prevail with me, the minister could not persuade me. O the good sermons that I have heard, but alas! I despised the word, and mocked the minister: woe, unto me for ever!" The minister replies again, The truth is you have done thus; but would you do so now? Would you still blaspheme, and curse, and be drunk, and riotous; or rather would you not now part with these, and take mercy instead of them? Then the poor soul cries out, "Now the Lord for his mercies' sake remove these sins from me: O, I had never so much delight in my sins heretofore, as now I have misery for them; but alas! it is not in my power to help my soul; if the Lord would do this, let him do what he will with it." What, saith the minister, you are then willing to part with your sins: "O yes," saith the soul, "I would rather offend all the world than God; I had rather go to hell than commit a sin; if it would please God to help me, I would forsake my sins with all my heart." Why, now the poor soul is coming again, and God is drawing him again from his corruptions.

Fourthly, when the soul is thus loosened, the Lord then fully plucks it by the cord of his Spirit; with an almighty hand he cuts the soul off from sin, and takes it into his own hand, that he may govern him, and dispose of him, according to his own good pleasure. Thus much of preparation, for the substance of it, on God's part.

CHAP. IV

The Substantial Parts of Preparation, on Man's Part.

Now are we to observe the disposition of the soul on man's part, which God works on the heart. It is known in two works: 1. Contrition, whereby the soul is cut off from sin. 2. Humiliation, whereby the soul is cut off from itself.

For so it is, that either the soul seeth no need to depart from sin, or else it thinks it can help itself out of sin. The first is called security, when the soul, seeing no need to be better, desires it not: against this the Lord sends contrition, causing men thereby to know the misery of sin, and to see need of a change. The second is carnal confidence, when a sinner begins to seek succour, and to scramble for his own comfort in his self-sufficiency: against this the Lord works humiliation, causing the soul hereby to see the weakness and emptiness of its duties, and that there is enough in his best services to condemn him for ever.

The first is security; when the soul is taken up with a secure course, and therefore never seeth any need of a change. Now, while a man lives thus, and blesses himself in his sin, it is impossible he should receive faith, or by faith repair unto Christ: the Lord, therefore, to remove this let, burdens the soul, and says, "You will live in drunkenness, in covetousness; you will have your sins: then take your sins, and get ye down to hell with them." At this voice the sinner begins to see where he is: "Is this true?" saith he; "then I am the most miserable creature under heaven." So the soul comes to a restless dislike of itself; and saith, "I must be otherwise, or I am a damned man for ever."

Secondly, when the soul seeth his wound and his sin ready to condemn him, it thinks, by Duties, or some such like matters, to succour itself; and it begins to say, "My hearing and my prayer, will not these save me?" Thus the soul in conclusion rests on duties: I will not say but these duties are all good, honourable, and comfortable; yet they are not God, but the ordinances of God. It is the nature of a sinful heart, to make the means as meritorious to salvation: a man that seeth his drunkenness, and his base contempt of God, voweth to take up a new course, and cries, "No more drunkenness, no more scoffing at those that go to hear the word; and then he thinks, what can I do more? to heaven I must go." All this is but a man's self; Christ, who is the substance of all, is forgotten; and therefore the poor soul famisheth with hunger. Mistake not, I pray you; these duties must be used, but a man must not, stay here: prayer saith, there is no salvation in me; and the sacraments and fasting say, there is no salvation in us: all these are helps, no causes of salvation. A man will use his

bucket, but he expects water from the well; these means are the buckets, but all our life and grace is in Christ. If you say your bucket shall help you, you may starve if you let it not down into the well: so, though you boast of praying, and hearing, and fasting, and of your alms; if none of these bring you to, or settle you on Christ, you shall die, though your works were as the works of an angel. As it is with a graft therefore, first it must be cut off from the old stock; secondly, it must be pared, and made fit for implantation into another: so the soul by contrition being cut off from sin, then humiliation pares it (pares away all a man's privileges) and makes it fit for ingrafting into Christ. Thus much of the lets; now for the works of contrition and humiliation.

1. *A Sight of Sin.*

For a further discovery of these two necessary things, we shall enter into particulars, and begin first with Contrition; which contains these steps: A sight of sin; a sense of divine wrath; and, a sorrow for sin.

The first step is a sight of sin: and sin must be seen clearly and convictingly.

First, clearly, it is not a confused sight of sin that will serve the turn; it is not enough to say, It is my infirmity, we are all sinners: no, this is the ground why we mistake our evils, and reform not our ways. A man must search narrowly, and prove his ways, as the goldsmith doth his gold in the fire: *I considered my ways,* saith David, *and turned away my feet unto thy testimonies;* in the original, *I turned my sins upside down.* And this clear sight appears in two particulars:

1. A man must see his sin nakedly, in its own colours: we must not look on sin through the mediums of profits and pleasures; but the soul of a true Christian, that would see sin clearly, must strip it of all content and quiet that ever the heart received in it; as the adulterer must not look upon sin in regard of the sweetness of it, nor the covetous man on his sin in regard of the profit of it: you that are such, the time will come, when you must die, and then consider what good these sinful courses will do you; how will you judge of sin then, when it shall leave a blot on your souls, and a guilt on your consciences?

2. A man must look on sin in the venom of it: and that you may do partly, if you compare it with other things; and partly, if you look at it in regard of itself. 1. Compare sin with those things that are most fearful and horrible; as suppose any soul here present were to behold the damned in hell, then propound this to your heart, What are those pains which the damned endure? And your heart shall quake at it; yet the least sin that ever you did commit, is a greater evil, in its own nature, than the greatest pains of the damned in hell. 2. Look at sin simply

as it is in itself, what is it but a profest opposing of God himself? A sinful creature joins side with the devil, and comes in battle array against the Lord God of hosts! I pray you in cold blood consider this, and say, "Good Lord! what a sinful wretch am I? that a poor damned wretch of the earth, should stand in defiance against God: that I should submit myself to the devil, and oppose the Lord God of hosts!"

Secondly, convictingly, that sin may be so to us, as it is in itself; and that discovers itself in these two particulars:

1. When, whatsoever sin is in general, we confess it the same in our own souls: it is the cursed distemper of our hearts, howsoever we hold the truth in general, yet when we come to our own sins, to deny the particulars. The adulterer confesseth the danger and filthiness of that sin in gross, but he will not apply it to himself: the rule therefore is, "Arrest thy soul, whosoever thou art, of those sins particularly whereof thou standest guilty: to this purpose say, "Are pride, and drunkenness, and uncleanness, such horrible sins? O Lord, it was my heart that was proud and vain; it was my eye that was wanton, and my heart that was unclean; Lord, here they are." Thus bring thy heart before God.

2. When the soul sits down with truth, and seeks no shift to oppose it. The minister saith, God hates such and such a sinner: "And the Lord hates me too," saith the soul, "for I am guilty of that sin." Thus many a time, when a sinner comes into the congregation, if the Lord please to work on him, the mind is enlightened, and the minister meets with his corruptions, as if he were in his bosom, and he answers all his cavils, and takes away all his objections: with that the soul begins to be in amaze, and saith, "If this be so, as it is for aught I know, and if all be true that the minister saith, then the Lord be merciful unto my soul, I am the most miserable sinner that ever was born?"

You that know not your sins, that you may see them convictingly, get you home to the law, and look into the glass thereof, and then enumerate all your sins in order thus. "So many sins against God himself in the first commandment, against his worship in the second, against his name in the third, against his sabbath in the fourth: nay, all our thoughts, words, and actions, all of them have been sins, able to sink our souls into the bottom of hell." And, secondly, that you may see them clearly, consider their effect, both in their doom, and in the execution: only to instance in their doom; methinks I see the Lord of heaven and earth, and the attributes of God, appearing before him, "the mercy of God, the goodness of God, the wisdom of God, the power of God, the patience and long-suffering of God;" and they all come to a sinner, and say, Mercy hath relieved you, goodness hath secured you, wisdom hath instructed you, power

hath defended you, patience hath borne with you, long-suffering hath endured you: now all these bid you adieu, "Farewell, damned souls; you must go hence to hell, to have your fellowship with damned ghosts: mercy shall never more relieve you, goodness shall never more succour you, wisdom shall never more instruct you, power shall never more defend you, patience shall never more endure you." And then shall you to endless, easeless, and remediless torments, where you will ever remember you sins, and say, "My covetousness and pride was the cause of this; I may thank my sins for this." Think of these things, I beseech you, seriously, and see your sins here, to prevent this sight hereafter.

2. *A Sense of Divine Wrath.*

The sinner by this time having his eyes so far opened, that he beholds his sins, begins to consider that God hath him in chase; and this sense of divine wrath discovers itself in these two particulars:

1. It works a fear of some evil to come.
2. It possesseth the soul with a feeling of this evil.

First, the soul considers, that the punishment which God hath threatened, shall be executed on him sooner or later: he cries, therefore, "What if God should damn me? God may do it: and what if God should execute his vengeance upon me?" Thus the soul fears, that the evil discovered will fall upon him. It is with a soul in this fear, as it was with Belshazzar, when he commanded the cups to be brought out of the house of the Lord; *An hand-writing came against him on the wall, and when he saw it, his thoughts troubled him, and his knees knocked one against another:* so it is with this fear; he that runs riot in the way of wickedness, there comes this fear and hand-writing against him, and then he cries, "These are my sins, and these are the plagues and judgments threatened against them: therefore why may not I be damned? why may not I be plagued?"

Secondly, the Lord pursues the soul, and discharges that evil upon him which was formerly feared; and now his conscience is all on a flame, and he saith to himself, "Oh! I have sinned, and offended a just God, and therefore I must be damned, and to hell I must go." Now the soul shakes, and is driven beyond itself, and would utterly faint, but that the Lord upholds it with one hand, as he beats it down with the other; he thinks every thing is against him, he thinks the fire burns to consume him, and that the air will poison him, and that hell's mouth gapes under him, and that God's wrath hangs over him, and if now the Lord should but take away his life, that he should tumble headlong into the bottomless hell: should any man, or minister, persuade the soul in this case to go to heaven for mercy, it replies in this manner; "Shall I repair to God? Oh, that's my trouble

is not he that great God, whose justice and mercy, and patience, I have abused? And is not he the great God of heaven and earth, that hath been incensed against me? Oh! with what a face can I appear before him? and with what heart can I look for any mercy from him? I have wronged his justice, and can his justice pardon me? I have abused his mercy, and can his mercy pity me? What, such a wretch as I am? If I had never enjoyed the means of mercy, I might have had some plea for myself; but Oh! I have refused that mercy, and have trampled the blood of Christ under my feet; and can I look for any mercy? No, no, I see the wrath of the Lord incensed against me, and that's all I look for."

3. *Sorrow for Sin.*

The next step is, sorrow for sin; concerning which are two questions: 1. Whether it be a work of saving grace? 2. Whether God work it in all alike?

To the first.—There is a double sorrow; one in preparation, the other in sanctification:—they differ thus: sorrow in preparation, is when the word of God leaves an impression upon the heart of a man, so that the heart only bears the blow of the Spirit; and hence come all those phrases of scripture, as wounded, pierced, pricked; so that this sorrow is rather a sorrow wrought on me, than any work coming from any spiritual abilility in me; but sorrow in sanctification, flows from a spiritual principle of grace, and from that power which the heart hath formerly received from God's Spirit; so that in this a man is a free worker.

To the second, I answer: Howsoever this work is the same in all for substance, yet in a different manner is it wrought in most: two men are pricked, the one with a pin, the other with a spear; so the Lord deals gently with one soul, and roughly with another. There is the melting of a thing, and the breaking of it with hammers; so there is a difference in persons. For instance, if the person be a scandalous liver, and an opposer of God and his grace; if a man have continued long in sin; if a man have been confident in a formal, civil course; or, if God purpose by some man to do some extraordinary work: in these four cases he lays a heavy blow on the heart; the Lord will bruise them, and make them seek to a faithful minister for direction, and to a poor Christian for counsel, whom before they despised. But if the soul be trained up among godly parents, the Lord may reform this man, and cut him off from his corruptions kindly. But give me a Christian that God doth please to work upon in this extraordinary manner, and to break his heart soundly, and to throw him down to purpose, though it cost him full dear; this man walks usually with care and conscience, hath more comfort himself, and gives more glory unto God.

Is it so, that the soul of a man is thus pierced to the quick, and run through by the wrath of the Almighty? then let this

teach all how to carry themselves towards such as God hath thus dealt with. Are they pierced men? O pity them: O let the bowels of compassion be let out toward them! Let us never cease to do good to them! O pray, and pity these wounds and vexations of spirit, which no man finds nor feels, but he that hath been thus wounded. It is to be feared that soul is wholly devoted to destruction, that hath a disdain against poor wounded creatures. Is it possible there should harbour such a spirit in any man? If the devil himself were incarnate, I cannot conceive what he could do worse.

2. If ever thou wouldest be comforted, and receive mercy from God; never be quiet till thou dost bring thy heart to a right pitch of sorrow: thou hast a little slight sorrow; but oh! labour to have thy heart truly touched, that at last it may break in regard of thy many distempers; remember, the longer seed-time, the greater harvest: *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted,* Matt. v. 4.

4. *The Extent of this Sorrow.*

Hitherto of this Contrition; the next work is Humiliation, which differs from the other, not in substance, but circumstance: for humiliation is only the extent of sorrow for sin, of which we have spoken; and it contains these two duties: 1. Submission; 2. Contentedness to be at the Lord's disposal.

The first part of humiliation, is Submission, which is wrought thus: the sinner now having had a sight of his sins, and a sorrow in some measure; he seeks far and wide, improves all means, and takes up all duties, that, if it were possible, he might heal his wounded soul: thus seeking, but finding no succour in what he hath, or doth, he is forced at last to make trial of the Lord: it is true, for the present he apprehends God to be just, and to be incensed against him; yet because he sees he cannot be worse than he is, and that none can help him but God, therefore he falls at the footstool of merce, and subits himself to the Lord, to do with him as it seemeth good in his eyes.

He saith, "This I know; all the means in the world cannot save me: yet who can tell but the Lord may have mercy on me, and cure this distressed conscience, and heal all these wounds that sin hath made in my soul?"

Or, for a further light, this subjection discovers itself in four particulars:

First, he seeth and confesseth that the Lord may, and, for ought he knows, will proceed in justice against him, and execute upon him those plagues that God hath threatened, and his sins have deserved.

Secondly, he conceives, that what God will do, he cannot avoid it; if the Lord will come, and require the glory of his justice against him, there is no way to avoid it, nor to bear it.

And this crusheth the heart, and makes the soul to be beyond all evasions, whereby it may seem to avoid the dint of the Lord's supper.

Thirdly, he casts away his weapons, and falls down before the Lord, and resigns himself to the sovereign power of God. Thus David, when the Lord cast him out of his kingdom, said to Zadok, "Carry back the ark of God into the city; if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me back again, and shew me both it, and his habitation: but if he thus say to me, I have no delight in thee; behold here I am, let him do with me as seemeth good in his eyes."

Fourthly, the soul freely acknowledgeth, that it is in God's power to dispose of him as he will; and therefore he lies and licks the dust, and cries, Mercy, mercy, Lord! he thinks not to purchase mercy at the Lord's hands, but only saith, "It is in God's good pleasure to do with him as he will, only he looks for favour, and cries, Mercy, Lord, mercy to this poor distressed soul of mine!" O, replies the Lord, dost thou need mercy? Cannot thy hearing, and praying, and fasting, carry thee to heaven? gird up now thy loins, and make thy fervent-est prayers, and let them meet my justice, and see if they can bear my wrath, or purchase mercy. "No, no," saith the sinner, "I know it by lamentable experience, that all my prayers and performances will never procure peace to my soul, nor give satisfaction to thy justice; I only pray for mercy, and I desire only to hear some news of mercy, to relieve this miserable soul of mine; it is only mercy that must help me. O mercy, if it be possible, to this poor soul of mine!"

The second part of humiliation is Contentedness to be at the Lord's disposal; and this point is of an higher pitch than the former. This contentedness discovers itself in these three particulars:

First, the soul reflects on God's mercy, which though he begged when he submitted, yet now he seeth so much corruption in himself, that he acknowledgeth himself unfit for it: "O mercy, mercy, Lord!"—What, saith the Lord, cannot your own duties purchase mercy?—"O no," saith the soul, "it is only mercy that must relieve and succour me; but such is my vileness, that I am not fit for the least mercy; and such is the wickedness of this wretched heart of mine, that whatsoever are the greatest plagues, I am worthy of them all, though never so insupportable: all the judgments that God hath threatened, and prepared for the devil and his angels, they are all due to my wretched soul. Had the devils had such hopes, and such offers of mercy, they would, for aught I know, have given entertainment to it? And what, do I seek for mercy? The least of God's mercies are too good for me, and the heaviest of God's plagues

are too little for me! I only for one sin deserve eternal damnation, for the wages of all sin is death, being committed against divine justice, and against an infinite majesty; and then what do all my sins deserve, committed and continued in, against all checks of conscience, and corrections, and the light of God's word? Hell is too good, and ten thousand hells too little, to torment such a wretch as I am. What, I mercy? I am ashamed to expect it: with what heart can I beg this mercy, which I have trodden under my feet? The Lord hath often wooed me, and when his wounds were bleeding, his side gored, and his cries coming into mine ears, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* then, even then, this Christ have I slighted, and made nothing of his blood; and can this blood of Christ do me any service? Indeed I crave grace, but how do I think to receive any? It is more than I can expect, I am not worthy of any; oh! no, I am only worthy to be cast out for ever."

Secondly, the soul reflects on justice, and now it acknowledgeth the equity of God's dealings, be they never so harsh; he confesseth that he is as clay in the hands of the potter, and the Lord may deal with him as he will! Yea, the soul is driven to an amazement at the Lord's patience, and that he hath been pleased to reprieve him so long, that God hath not cast him out of his presence, and sent him down to hell long ago. Hence it is that the soul will not maintain any kind of murmuring, or heart-rising, against the Lord's dealings: or if nature will be striving sometimes, and say, "Why are not my prayers answered? I see such a soul comforted, and why not I as well as he?" Then the soul stifles, and crushes, and chokes these wretched distempers, and doth also abase itself before the Lord, saying, "What if God will not hear my prayers; what if God will not pacify my conscience; doth the Lord do me any wrong? vile hell-hound that I am, I have my sin and my shame; wrath is my portion, and hell is my place, thither may I go when I will; it is mercy that God thus deals with me." And now the soul clears God in his justice, and saith, "It is just with God that all the prayers which come from this filthy heart of mine, should be abhorred, and that all my labours in holy duties should never be blessed; it is I that have sinned against checks of conscience, against knowledge, against heaven, and therefore it is just that I should carry this horror of heart with me to the grave; it is I that have abused mercy, and therefore it is just that I should go with a tormenting conscience down into hell: and Oh! that if I be in hell, I might have a spirit to justify thy name there; and say, Now I am come down to hell amongst you damned creatures, but the Lord is righteous in all his doings, and I am justly condemned."

Thirdly, hence the soul comes to be quiet under the heavy

hand of God in that helpless condition: it takes the blow, and lies under the burden, and goes away quietly and patiently: O this is an heart worth gold! "O," saith he, "it is fit that God should glorify himself, though I be damned for ever: whatsoever I have, it is the reward of my own works, and the end of my own ways: if I be damned, I may thank my pride, and my stubbornness, and my peevishness of spirit: what shall I repine against the Lord, because his wrath and his displeasure lies heavy upon me? Oh no, let me repine against my sin, the cause of all; let me grudge against my base heart, that hath nourished these adders in my bosom, but let me not speak one word against him." Thus you see what is the behaviour of the soul in this contentedness to be at the Lord's disposal.

But some may object, Ought the soul to be thus content to be left in this damnable condition?

I answer, This contentedness implies two things; first, a carnal security, and this is a cursed sin: secondly, a calmness of soul, not murmuring aginst the Lord's dispensation towards him: and this contentedness (opposed against quarrelling with the Almighty) every humbled soul doth attain to, although in every one it is not so plainly seen. A thief taken for robbery, on whom the sentence of death hath passed, should not neglect the means to get a pardon; yet if he cannot procure it, he must not murmur against the judge for condemning him: so we should not be careless in using all means for our good; but still seek to God for mercy: yet we ought to be contented with whatsoever mercy shall deny, because we are not worthy of any favour. The soul, in a depth of humiliation, first stoops to the condition that the Lord will appoint; he dares not fly away from God, nor repine against the Lord, but lies down meekly. 2. As he is content with the hardest measure, so he is content with the longest time, saying, "Although the Lord hide his face, and turn away his loving countenance from me, yet I will look towards heaven, so long as I have an eye to see, and an hand to lift up; the Lord may take his own time:" nay, the poor broken heart resolves thus; "If I lie and lick the dust all my days, and cry for mercy all my life long; if my last words might be Mercy, mercy, it were well." 3. As he is content to stay the longest time, so he is content with the least pittance of mercy: "Let my condition be never so hard," saith the soul, "do, Lord, what thou wilt with me, let the fire of thy wrath consume me here, only recover me hereafter; if I find mercy at the last, I am content; and whatsoever thou givest, I bless thy name for it." He quarrels not, saying, "Why are not my graces increased? and why am I not thus and thus comforted?" No, he looks for mercy, and if he have but a crumb of mercy, he is comforted and quieted for ever.

Hence we collect: 1. That they which have the greatest parts,

and gifts, and honour, are, for the most part, hardly brought home to Christ; they that are most hardly humbled, are most hardly converted: what is humiliation, but the emptying of the soul from whatsoever makes it swell? The heart must not joy in any thing, nor rest upon any thing, but only yield to the Lord, to be at his disposing. Now these parts, and abilities, and means, are great props for the heart of a carnal man to rest upon; whence the apostle, *Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called;* indeed, blessed be God, some are, but not many: few, that have so much of themselves, are brought to renounce themselves.

2. That an humble heart mades all a man's life quiet, and marvellously sweeteneth whatsoever estate he is in: indeed sometimes he may be tossed and troubled, yet he is not distracted, because he is contented; as it is with a ship on the sea, when the billows begin to roar, and the waves are violent, if the anchor be fastened deep, it stays the ship: so this work of humiliation is the anchor of the soul; and the deeper it is fastened, the more quiet is the heart. When Job, in his extremity, gave way to his proud heart, he quarrelled with the Almighty, his friends, and all; but when the Lord had humbled him, then, *Behold I am vile; once have I spoken, yea twice, but now no more.* And this humiliation quiets a man both in the fiercest temptations, and in the heaviest oppositions.

1. In the fiercest temptations: when Satan begins to besiege the heart of a poor sinner, and lays a battery against him, see how the humbled heart runs him out of breath at his own weapons! Dost thou think, says Satan, to get mercy from the Lord? God will not respect the prayers of such vile sinners. "True," saith the poor soul, "I have often denied the Lord when he called upon me, and therefore he may justly deny me all the prayers I make; yet thus he hath commanded, that seek to him for mercy I must, and if the Lord will cast me away, and reject my prayers, I am contented therewith: what then, Satan?" What then? saith the devil; I thought this would have made thee to despair; but this is not all, for God will give thee over, and leave thee to thyself, to thy lusts and corruptions, and thy latter end shall be worse than thy beginning. To this answers the humbled soul, "If the Lord will give me up to my base lusts, and if the Lord will leave me to my sins, because I have left his gracious commands; and if I shall fall one day, and be disgraced and dishonoured, yet let the Lord be honoured, and let not God lose the praise of his power and justice, and I am contented therewith: what then, Satan?" What then? saith the devil; I sure thought now thou wouldst have despaired: but this is not all, for when God hath left thee to thy sins, then will he break out in vengeance against thee, and make thee an example of his heavy vengeance to

all ages; and therefore it is best for thee to prevent this timely judgment by some untimely death. To this replies the soul, "Whatsoever God can or will do, I know not, yet so great are my sins, that he cannot, or, at least, will not do so much against me as I have justly deserved: come what will come, I am contented still to be at the Lord's disposal: what then, Satan?" And thus he runs Satan out of breath.

So in all temptations of Satan, lie low, and be contented to be at God's disposing, and all these fiery temptations shall not be able to hurt you.

2. In the heaviest oppositions: when Satan is gone, then comes troubles and oppositions of the world, in all which humiliation will quiet the soul. Cast disgrace upon the humble heart, and he cures it thus: he thinks worse of himself than any man else can do, and if they would make him vile and loathsome, he is more vile in his own eyes than they can make him: O that I could bring your hearts to be in love with this blessed grace of God!

Is there any soul here that hath been vexed with the temptations of Satan, oppositions of men, or with his own distempers? and would he now arm himself, that nothing should disquiet him, but in all, to be above all, and to rejoice in all? Oh! be humbled, and then be above all the devils in hell; certainly they shall not so disquiet you, as to cause you to be misled, or uncomforted, if you would but be humbled.

What remains then? Be exhorted, as you desire mercy and favour at God's hands, to this humiliation. And for motives, consider the good things that God hath promised, and which he will bestow upon all that are truly humbled: I shall reduce all to these three:

First, by humiliation we are made capable of all those treasures of wisdom, grace, and mercy, that are in Christ.

Secondly, humiliation gives a man the comfort of all that is good in Christ. To be truly humbled, is the next way to be truly comforted; the Lord will look to him that hath an humble contrite heart, and trembles at his word. The Lord will give him such a gracious look, as shall make his heart dance in his breast. Thou poor humble soul, the Lord will give thee a glimpse of his favour, when thou art tired in thy trouble; when thou lookest up to heaven, the Lord will look down upon thee, and will refresh thee with mercy: Oh! be humbled then every one of you, and the Lord Jesus, who comes with healing under his wings, will comfort you, and you shall see the salvation of our God.

Thirdly, humiliation ushers glory: *Whosoever humbles himself as a little child, shall be greatest in the kingdom of heaven.* He shall be in the highest degree of grace here, and of glory hereafter: for as thy humiliation, so shall be thy faith and sanctification, and obedience, and glory.

Now the Lord make me, and thee, and all of us humble, that we may have this mercy. Who would not have the Lord Jesus to dwell with him? Who would not have the Lord Christ, by the glory of his grace, to honour and refresh him? Methinks your hearts should yearn for it, and say, O Lord, break my heart, and humble me, that mercy may be my portion for ever: then might you say with comfort on your death-beds, "Though I go away, and leave wife and children behind me, poor and mean, in the world, yet I leave Christ with them:" when you are gone, this will be better for them than all the gold or honours in the world. What can I say? Since the Lord offers so kindly, now kiss the Son, be humble, yield to all God's commands, take home all truths, and be at God's disposing; let all the evil that is threatened, and all the good that is offered, prevail with your hearts: or if means cannot, yet the Lord prevail with you; the Lord empty you, that Christ may fill you; the Lord humble you, that you may enjoy happiness and peace, and be lifted up to the highest glory, there to reign for ever and ever.

CHAP. V.

The Call on God's Part, for the Soul to close with, and to rely on Christ.

Hitherto of our first general, the preparation of the soul for Christ: the next is, the implantation of the soul into Christ; and that hath two parts, 1. The putting of the soul into Christ; 2. The growing of the soul with Christ.

As a graft is first put into the stock, and then it grows together with the stock: these two things are answerable in the soul, and when it is brought to this, then a sinner comes to be partaker of all spiritual benefits.

The first part is, the putting in of the soul: when the soul is brought out of the world of sin, to lie upon, and to close with, the Lord Jesus Christ: and this hath two particular passages; the call on God's part, and the answer on man's part.

The call on God's part is this: when the Lord by the call of his gospel, and the work of his Spirit, doth so clearly reveal the fulness of mercy, that the soul, humbled, returns answer.

In which observe the means, and the cause whereby God doth call.

1. The means is the ministry of the Gospel; the sum thereof is this, That there is fulness of mercy, and grace, and salvation, brought unto us through the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence the phrase of scripture calls this gospel, or this mercy, *A treasury; All the treasures of wisdom and holiness are in Christ:* not one treasure, but all treasures: where the gospel comes, there is joy

for the sorrowful, peace for the troubled, strength for the weak, relief seasonable and suitable to all wants, miseries, and necessities, both present and future.

If then sorrow assail thee when thou art come thus far, look not on thy sins, to pore upon them; neither look into thy own sufficiency, to procure any good there. It is true, thou must see thy sins and sorrow for them, but this is for the lower form, and thou must get this lesson before-hand; and when thou hast gotten this lesson of contrition and humiliation, look then only to God's mercy, and the riches of his grace in Christ.

2. For the cause: the Lord doth not only appoint the means, but by the work of the Spirit, he doth bring all the riches of his grace into the soul truly humbled. If you ask, how? First, with strength of evidence the Spirit presents to the broken-hearted sinner, the freeness of God's grace to the soul: and secondly, the Spirit by an over-piercing work, doth leave a supernatural and spiritual virtue on the heart.

Now the word of the gospel, and the work of the Spirit, always go together; not that God is tied to any means, but that he tieth himself to the means: hence the gospel is called, the power of God to salvation, because the power of God ordinarily, and in common course, appears therein: the waters of life and salvation run only in the channel of the gospel; nay, observe this, when all arguments fail to persuade the heart to go to God, one text of scripture will stand a man in stead, above all human learning and inventions; because the Spirit goes forth in this, and none else.

CHAP. VI.

The Answer on Man's Part, for the Soul to close with, and to rely on Christ.

Hitherto of the call on God's part; now we are come to the answer on man's part. No sooner hath the gospel and God's Spirit clearly revealed the fulness of God's mercy in Christ, but the soul gives answer to the call of God. Mercy is a proper object of the mind to be enlightened, of hope to be sustained, of desire to be supported, of love to be cheered; nay, there is a full sufficiency of all good in Christ, that so the will of man may take full repose and rest in him; therefore the Lord saith, *Come unto me, all that are weary and heavy laden;* come, mind, and hope, and desire, and love, and will, and heart. They all answer, We come: the mind saith, let me know this mercy above all, and desire to know nothing but Christ, and him crucified: let me expect this mercy, saith hope, that belongs to me, and will befall me: desire saith, let me long after it: oh! saith love, let me embrace and welcome

it: oh! saith the heart, let me lay hold on the handle of salvation; here we will live, and here we will die, at the footstool of God's mercy.

2. *A Sight of Christ, or of Mercy in Christ.*

But for a further discovery of these works of the soul, we shall enter into particulars: and for their order; first, the Spirit lets in a light into his heart, and discovers unto him, that God will deal graciously with him. It is with a sinner, as with a man that sits in darkness, haply he seeth a light in the street out of a window, but he sits still in darkness, and is in the dungeon all the while, and he thinks, "How good were it, if a man might enjoy that light!" So, many a poor sinner seeth God's mercies at a distance: "Ah!" thinks he, "I am in darkness still, and never had a drop of mercy vouchsafed unto me." At last the Lord lets a light into his house, and puts the candle into his own hand, and makes him see by particular evidence, thou shalt be pardoned.

The manner how the Spirit works this, is discovered in three passages:

First, the Spirit of the Lord meeting with an humble, broken sinner, (he that is a proud, stout-hearted wretch, knows nothing of this matter,) opens the eye, and now he begins to see some glimmering, that he can look into the things of God.

2. Then the Lord lays before him all the riches of the treasure of his grace; no sooner hath he given him an eye, but he lays colours before him, (the unsearchable riches of Christ,) that he may look, and fall in love with those sweet treasures; and then saith the soul, "Oh, that mercy, and grace, and pardon, were mine! Oh, that my sins were done away!" The Lord saith, "I will refresh them that are heavy-laden." Then saith the soul, "Oh, that I had that refreshing!" You shall have rest, saith God. "Oh, that I had rest too!" saith the soul: and now the soul looks after mercy and compassion.

3. The Spirit of the Lord doth witness thoroughly and effectually to the soul, that this mercy in Christ belongs to him: observe, none in heaven or in earth, but only God's Spirit, can make this certificate; when it is night, all the candles in the world cannot take away the darkness: so, though all the means of grace and salvation, all the candle-light of the ministry, are good helps, yet the darkness of the night will not be gone, before the Sun of righteousness arise in our hearts. Hence it is that it proves so difficult a matter to comfort a distressed soul; "I shall one day go down to hell," saith the soul. Let all the ministers under heaven cry, "Comfort ye, comfort ye;" still he replies, "Will the Lord pardon me?" Let me speak therefore to you that are ministers: You do well to

labour to give comfort to a poor fainting soul; but always say, "Comfort, Lord: O Lord, say unto this poor soul, that Thou art his salvation."

3. *Hope in Christ*

The mind being enlightened, the Lord calls on the affections; come desire, come love; but the first voice is to hope. Now this affection is set out to meet mercy afar off, it is the looking out of the soul: "Oh, when will it be, Lord? Thou sayest mercy is prepared, thou sayest mercy is approaching; Oh, when will it come, Lord?"

The manner how God's Spirit works this, is discerned in three particulars: the Lord doth sweetly stay the heart, and fully persuade the soul, that a man's sins are pardonable, and that all his sins may be pardoned, and that all the good things he wanteth may be bestowed: when a poor sinner seeth no rest in the creature, nor in himself, though all means, all help, all men, all angels, should join together; then the Lord lifteth up his voice, and saith from heaven, Thy sins are pardonable in the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. The Lord doth sweetly persuade the soul that all his sins are pardonable; the Lord persuades his heart that he intendeth mercy; by this means hope comes to be assured, knowing the promise shall be at the last accomplished: the former only sustained the heart, but this comforts the soul, that undoubtedly it shall have mercy: the Lord Jesus came to seek, and to save, that which was lost: now saith the broken and humble sinner, God saith, *Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden:* "I am weary, and unless the Lord intend good unto me, why should he invite me, and bid me come? surely he means to shew me mercy, nay, he promiseth to relieve me when I come, therefore he will do good unto me."

3. The Lord lets in some taste of the sweetness of his love, so that the soul is deeply affected with it; it is the letting in the riches of his love, that turneth the expectation of the soul another way, yea, it turneth the whole stream of the soul thitherward.

I desire you, I entreat you, if you have any hope of heaven, if you have any treasure in Christ, labour to quicken this affection above all; the means are these: 1. Labour to be much acquainted with the precious promises of God, to have them at hand, and upon all occasions: these are thy comforts, and will support thy soul.

2. Maintain in thy heart a deep and serious acknowledgment of that supreme authority of the Lord, to do what he will, and how he will, according to his pleasure. Alas! we think too often to bring God to our bow; "We have hoped thus long, and God hath not answered; and shall we wait still?" Wait! ay, wait,

and bless God that you may wait: if you may lie at God's feet, and put your mouths in the dust, and at the end of your days have one crumb of mercy, it is enough. Therefore, check those distempers. "Shall I wait still?" It is a strange thing, that a poor worm, worthy of hell, should take state, and stand upon terms with God; "he will not wait upon God:" Who must wait then? Must God wait, or man wait? It was the apostles' question, *Wilt thou now restore the kingdom to Israel?* To whom our Saviour answered, *It is not for you to know the times and seasons;* as who should say, It is for you to wait, and to expect mercy, it is not for you to know. If you begin to wrangle, and say, "How long, Lord?—When, Lord?—And why not now, Lord?—Why not I, Lord?" now check thy own heart, and say, "It is not for me to know, it is for me to be humble, and abased, and wait for mercy."

4. *A Desire after Christ.*

When the soul is humbled, and the eye opened, then he begins thus to reason; "Oh, happy I that see mercy; but miserable I, if I come to see this, and never have a share in it! O why not I, Lord? My soul now thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land; my affections now hunger after righteousness, both infused and imputed." Now this desire is begotten thus:

When the soul is come so far, that after a thorough conviction of sin, and sound humiliation under God's mighty hand, it hath a seasonable revelation of the glorious mysteries of Christ, of his excellencies, invitations, truth, tender-heartedness, of the heavenly splendour of the pearl of great price; then doth the soul conceive, by the help of the Holy Ghost, this desire and vehement longing: and lest any cozen themselves by any misconceits about it;—it is then known to be saving,

1. When it is joined with an hearty willingness and unfeigned resolution, to sell all, to part with all sin, to bid adieu for ever to our darling delight. If thou desirest earnestly, thou wilt work accordingly; for as the desire is, so will thy endeavour be.

2. When it is earnest, vehement, extreme thirsting after Christ, as the parched earth for refreshing showers, or the hunted hart for the water-brooks. We read of a Scottish penitent, who, a little before his confession, freely confessed his fault, to the shame, as he said, of himself, and of the devil, but to the glory of God: he acknowledged it to be so heinous and horrible, that had he a thousand lives, and could die ten thousand deaths, he could not make satisfaction. "Notwithstanding," saith he, "Lord, thou hast left me this comfort in thy word, that thou hast said, 'Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will refresh you:' Lord, I am weary; Lord, I am heavy-laden with my sins, which are innumerable; I am ready to sink, Lord, even into hell, unless thou in thy mercy

put to thine hand, and deliver me: Lord, thou hast promised, by thine own word out of thy mouth, that thou wilt refresh the weary soul." And with that he thrust out one of his hands, and, reaching as high as he could towards heaven, he with a louder voice cried, "I challenge thee, Lord, by that word, and by that promise thou hast made, that thou perform and make it good to me, that call for ease and mercy at thy hands." Proportionably, when heavy-heartedness for sin hath so dried up the bones, and the angry countenance of God so parched the heart that the poor soul begins now to gasp for grace, as thirsty land for drops of rain; then the poor sinner, though dust and ashes, with an holy humility thus speaks unto Christ, "O merciful Lord God, thou art Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end; thou sayest it is done, of things that are yet to come, so faithful and true are thy promises. Thou hast promised by thine own word out of thine own mouth, that unto him that is athirst, thou wilt give of the fountain of the water of life freely. O Lord, I thirst, I faint, I languish, I long for one drop of mercy: as the hart panteth for the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God, and after the yearning bowels of thy compassions: had I now in possession the glory, the wealth, and pleasures, of the whole world; nay, had I ten thousand lives, joyfully would I lay them down, to have this poor trembling soul received into the bleeding arms of my blessed Redeemer. O Lord, my spirit within me is melted into tears of blood, my heart is shivered into pieces; out of the very place of dragons, and shadow of death, do I lift up my thoughts heavy and sad before thee. The remembrance of my former vanities and pollutions, is a vomit to my soul, and it is sorely wounded by the grievous representation thereof; the very flames of hell, Lord, the fury of thy just wrath, the scorchings of my own conscience, have so wasted and parched mine heart, that my thirst is insatiable, my bowels are hot within me, my desire after Jesus Christ, pardon, and grace, is greedy as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which have a most vehement flame; and, Lord, in thy blessed book thou callest and criest, *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.* In that great day of the feast, thou stoodest, and criedst with thine own mouth, *If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink;* and these are thine own words, *Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, shall be filled.* I challenge thee, Lord, in this my extremest thirst after thine own blessed self, and spiritual life in thee, by that word and by that promise which thou hast made, that thou make it good to me, that lies grovelling in the dust, and trembling at thy feet: Oh! open now that promised well of life, for I must drink, or else I die."

The means to obtain this desire, are these three:

1 Be acquainted thoroughly with thine own necessities, with

that emptiness that is in thyself. A groundless presumption makes a man careless; see into thine own necessities, confess the want of this desire after the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Labour to spread forth the excellency of all the beauty and glory that is in the promises of God: couldest thou but view them in their proper colours, they would even ravish thee, and quicken thy desires.

3. After all this, know it is not in thy power to bring thy heart to desire Christ; thou canst not hammer out a desire upon thy own anvil, hew thy own rock as long as thou wilt; nay, let all the angels in heaven, and all the ministers on earth, provoke thee, yet if the hand of the Lord be wanting, thou shalt not lift up thine heart, nor step one step towards heaven: then go to him who is able to work this desire in thy soul. Remember, desires grow not in thy garden, they spring not from the root of thy abilities: O seek unto God, and confess, "In truth, Lord, it is thou from whom come all our good desires, it is thou must work them in us; and therefore, Lord, quicken thou this soul, and enlarge this heart of mine, for thou only art the God of desire." Thus hale down a desire from the Lord, and from the promise, for there only must thou have it; the smoking flax God will not quench. Flax will not smoke, but a spark must come into it, and that will make it catch fire and smoke. Thus lay your hearts before the Lord, and say, "Good Lord, here is only flax, here is only a stubborn heart, but strike thou by the promise one spark from heaven, that I may have a smoking desire after Christ, and after grace.

5. *A Love of Christ.*

We have run through two affections, Hope and Desire, and the next is Love. A possible good stirs up hope; a necessary excellency in that good, settleth desire; and a relish in that good settled, kindles love. This is the order of God's work; if the good be absent, the understanding saith, it is to be desired, O that I had it! Then it sends out hope, and that waits for good, and stays till he can see it; and yet if that good cannot come, then desire hath another work; it goes up and down wandering, and seeketh and sueth for Christ Jesus After this, if the Lord Jesus be pleased to come himself into the view of the heart which longeth thus after him, then love leads him into the soul, and tells the will of him, saying, Lo! here is Jesus Christ the Messiah, that hath ordered these great things for his saints and people.

The ground of this love is God's Spirit in the promise, letting in some intimation of God's love into the soul. We love him, because he loved us first: the burning glass must receive heat of the beams of the sun, before it burn any thing; so there must be a beam of God's love to fall upon the soul, be-

fore it can love God again; *I drew them with the cords of a man, even with the bands of love.* God lets in the cords of love into the soul, and that draws love again to God.

This love of God doth beget our love in three particulars:

First, there is a sweetness and a relish which God's love lets into the soul, and warms the heart with. A fainting sinner is cold at heart, and therefore the Lord lets in a drop of his loving-kindness, and this warms the heart, and the soul is even filled with the happiness of the mercy of God.

Secondly, as that sweetness warms the heart, so the freeness of the love of God begins to kindle this love in the soul, that it sparkles again: God setteth out his love towards us, seeing that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. This commends the love of God, the Lord sends to poor and miserable sinners, and saith, Commend my mercy to such a one, and tell him, that though he hath been an enemy to me, yet I am a friend to him; and though he hath been rebellious against me, yet I am a God and a Father to him. When a poor sinner considers this with himself, he saith, "Is the Lord so merciful to me? I that loved my sins, and continued in them, had it not been just that I should have perished in them? But will the Lord not only spare his enemy, but give his Son for him? O let my soul for ever rejoice in this unconceivable goodness of God!" Be thy heart never so hard, if it have but the sense of this, it cannot but stir thee to love.

Thirdly, the greatness of the freeness of this mercy of God, being settled upon the heart, inflames it; the sweetness warms the heart, this freeness kindles the fire; and when the greatness of the sweetness comes to be valued, this sets the heart all on a flame. This will make the soul say, What! I that have done all that I could against this good God! O, it breaks my heart to think of it! There was no name under heaven that I did blaspheme more than this; no command under heaven I so much despised, as the command of God and of Christ; no spirit that I grieved so much as the good Spirit of God; and therefore had the Lord only given me a look, or spoken a word to me, it had been an infinite mercy; but to send his Son to save me, it is incomparable: I could not conceive to do so much evil against him, as he hath done good to me: O the breadth of that mercy beyond all limits! O the length of that mercy beyond all time! O the depth of that mercy below a man's misery! O the height of that mercy above the height of my understanding! If my hands were all love, that I could work nothing but love; and if mine eyes were able to see nothing but love; and my mind to think of nothing but love; and if I had a thousand bodies, they were all too little to love that God, that hath thus unmeasurably loved me, a poor sinful hell-hound. O Lord, my strength, O how should I but love thee!

But how may I know whether my love be a true love, or a false love? How may I know that my love is of the right stamp?

Let every man put his love upon the trial, and examine thus, whether thou dost welcome Christ and grace according to the worth of them? If thou dost, it will appear in these particulars:

1. Observe the root from whence thy love came. Canst thou say, I love the Lord, because he hath loved me? Then thy love is right. God cannot but like that love which came from himself. Is thy soul affected and enlarged in love to the Lord because thou hast felt the sweetness of his grace? Canst thou say, the Lord hath let in a glimpse of his favour? And the Lord hath said in his truth, he looks to him that trembles at his word; the minister said it, and the Spirit saith it, that my mercy is registered in heaven: O how should I love the Lord! My sins are many, which I have bewailed; my sighs I have put up to heaven, and at the last the Lord hath given me a gracious answer: O how shall I love the Lord my strength? If it be thus with thee, thy love is sound.

2. If thou entertain thy Saviour as it beseems him, thou must entertain him as a king, give up all to him, and entertain none with him, but such as are attendants upon him; love all in Christ, and for Christ, but express thy love and joy to Christ above all: he is a king, and all the rest are but as retainers. He that loves any thing equal with Christ, doth not rightly love Christ.

3. The soul that rightly entertains Christ is marvellously weary and watchful that he may not sadden that good Spirit of God, to grieve him, and cause him to go away. The spouse sought long for her beloved, and at last brought him home; and when she had welcomed him, she gives a charge to all the house not to stir, nor awake her love. When a prince comes into the house of a great man, what charge is there given to make no noise in the night! The soul, when it hath received the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, doth thus; he gives a peremptory charge to keep watch and ward, and gives a charge to hope, and desire, and love, and joy, and the mind, and all, not to grieve or molest the good Spirit of God; let there be no motion but to entertain it, no advice but to receive it, and do nothing that may work the least kind of dislike unto it.

And now let me prevail with your hearts to this duty; love the Lord, all ye his saints. Whom will you love, if you love not him? Oh! you poor ones, love ye the Lord, for you have need; and all you rich ones, love ye the Lord, for you have cause; and you little ones too:—he knocks at every man's heart, and persuades every man's soul; love ye the Lord.

The means are these: 1. Give attendance daily to the pro-

mise of grace, and Christ; drive away all other suitors from the soul, and let nothing come between the promise and it.

2. Labour to be thoroughly acquainted with the beauty and sweetness of Christ in the promise.

Christ is worthy in himself: if we had a thousand hearts to bestow, we were not able to love him sufficiently. What would you love? Wouldst thou have beauty? then thy Saviour is beautiful; *Thou art fairer than the children of men,* Psal. xlv. 2. Wouldst thou have strength? then thy Saviour is strong; *Gird thy sword on thy thigh, O most mighty,* Psal. xlv. 3. Wouldst thou have riches? thy Saviour is more rich, if it be possible, than he is strong; *He is heir of all things,* Heb. i. 1. Wouldst thou have wisdom? then thy Saviour is wise, yea, wisdom itself; *In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,* Col. ii. 3. Wouldst thou have life eternal? Christ is the author of life and happiness to all that have him.

And Christ deserves our love, in regard of benefits to us. Be man never so worthy in himself, yet if he have expressed the part of an enemy, a woman saith, I will not have him though he have all the world. This takes off the affection. It is not so with the Lord Jesus: as he is worthy of all love in himself, so he hath dealt mercifully with you. In your sickness, who helped you? in wants, who supplied you? in anguish of heart, who relieved you? It was Jesus Christ. Oh! therefore love him; deal with him as he deserves; enlarge your hearts to him for ever.

Yea, Christ seeks our love: here is the admiration of mercy, that our Saviour, who hath been rejected by a company of sinful creatures, should seek their love! For shame, refuse him not, but let him have love ere he go. Had the Lord received us when we had come to him and humbled our hearts before him, had he heard when we had spent our days and all our strength in begging and craving, it had been an infinite mercy: but when the Lord Jesus Christ shall seek to us by his messengers, (it is all the work we have to do, to woo you for the Lord Jesus Christ,) when he shall come and wait upon us, and seek our love; Oh, this is the wonder of mercies! He looks for no portion, he will take thee and all thy wants. Get you home then; and every one, in secret, labour to deal truly with your own hearts; make up a match in this manner, and say, "Is it possible that the Lord should look so low? that a prince should send to a poor peasant? that majesty should stoop to meanness? heaven to earth? God to man? Hath the Lord offered mercy to me? and doth he require nothing of me but to love him again?" Call upon your hearts, I charge you, and say thus, "Lord, if all the light of mine eyes were love, and all the speeches of my tongue were love, it were all too little to love thee: Oh, let me love thee!"

6. *A Relying on Christ.*

We are now come to the work of the will, which is the great wheel of the soul. The former affections were but as handmaids to usher in Christ. The mind saith, "I have seen Christ;" Hope saith, "I have waited:" Desire saith, "I have longed:" Love saith, "I am kindled:" Then saith the will, "I will have Christ, it shall be so:" and this makes up the match. The seeds of faith went before; now faith is come to some perfection; now the soul reposes itself upon the Lord Jesus.

And this reposing or resting itself, discovers a five-fold act:

First, it implies a going out of the soul to Christ: when the soul seeth this, that the Lord Jesus is his aid, and must ease him, and pardon his sins, then, "Let us go to that Christ," saith he; "it is the Lord's call, *Come to me, all ye that are weary*:" this voice coming home to the heart, and the prevailing sweetness of the call overpowering the heart, the soul goes out, and flings itself upon the riches of God's grace.

Secondly, it lays fast hold upon Christ: when the Lord saith, Come, my love, come my dove, O come away! "Behold I come," saith she; and when she is come, she fasteneth upon Christ, saying, "My beloved is mine, and I am his:" faith lays hold on the Lord, and will not let mercy go, but cleaves unto it, though it conflict with the Lord; *Should he slay me,* saith Job, *yet will I trust in him.*

Thirdly, it flings the weight of all its troubles, guilt, and corruptions, upon the Lord Jesus Christ. As when a man cannot go of himself, he lays all the weight of his body upon another; so the soul goes to Christ, and lays all the weight of itself upon Christ, and saith, "I have no comfort, O Lord; all my discomforts I lay upon Christ, and I rely on the Lord for comfort and consolation:" *Who is this,* saith Solomon, *that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning on her beloved?* Cant. viii. 5. The party coming is the church, the wilderness is the troubles and vexations the church meets with, and the beloved is the Lord Jesus Christ; now the church leans herself all upon her husband, she walks along with him, but he bears all the burden: *Cast all your cares upon him,* saith Peter, *for he careth for you,* 1 Pet. v. 7.

Fourthly, it draws virtue, and derives power, from the Lord Jesus Christ for succour and supplies; and here is the especial life of faith, it goes for mercy, and grace, and comfort in Christ; he knows 'tis to be had from him, and therefore he fetched all from him: *With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation,* Isa. xii. 3. The fountain of salvation is Christ, and all the waters of life, of grace and mercy, are in Christ Jesus: now it is not enough to let down the bucket into the well, but it must be drawn out also; it is not enough

to come to Christ, but we must draw the water of grace from Christ to ourselves.

Fifthly, faith leaves the soul with the promise; yea, notwithstanding all delays, denials, discouragements from God, faith brings on the heart still; it will be sure to lie at the gate, and keep the soul with the promise, whatever befals it. The faithful soul lays hold upon the Lord for mercy, pardon, power, and grace, and though the Lord seem to give him up to the torment of sin and corruption, yet the soul saith, "Though my soul go down to hell, I will hold here for mercy, till the Lord comfort and pardon, and subdue graciously these cursed corruptions, which I am not able to master myself."

Hast thou gottem faith? then labour to husband this grace well. It is a shame to see those that have a right and title to grace and Christ, yet live at such an under-rate: I would have you to live above the world, for the Lord doth not grudge his people comfort, but would have them live cheerfully, and have strong consolations, and mighty assurance of God's love. Is there not cause? surely there is. Why, faith, if it be right, will make the life of a Christian most easy, most comfortable. Unfaithful souls sink in their sorrows upon every occasion, but faith gives ease to a man in all his conversation: 1. Because faith hath a skill to put over all cares to another. We take up the cross, but faith casts all the care on Christ: an easy matter it is to lie under the burden, when another bears all the weight of it. Look how it is with two ferry-men, the one hales his boat about the shore, and cannot get off, but tugs and pulls, and never puts her forth to the tide; the other puts his boat upon the stream, and sets up his sail, and then he may sit still, and the wind will carry him whither he is to go:—just thus is it with a faithful soul and an unbeliever; all the care of the first, is to put himself upon the stream of God's providence, and set up the sail of faith, and take the gale of God's mercy; so he goes cheerfully, because it is not he that carries himself, but the Lord Jesus: whereas every unfaithful soul tugs and pull at the business, and can find neither ease nor success. 2. Because faith sweetens all afflictions: howsoever it apprehends all troubles and afflictions, yet withal it apprehends the faithfulness of God, ordering all for our good; and that's the reason why all our troubles are digested comfortably, without any harshness at all.

You will say, If faith brings such ease, how may a man that hath faith, improve it, to have such comfort by it? I answer, the rules are four:

1. Labour to gain some evidence to thy own soul, that thou hast a title to the promise: the reason why poor Christians go drooping, and are overwhelmed with their sins and miseries, is because they see not their title to mercy, nor their evidence of God's love.

2. Labour to set an high price on the promises of God: one promise, and the sweetness of God's mercy in Christ, is better than all the honours or riches in the world; prize these at this rate, and thou canst not choose but find ease and be contented.

3. Labour to keep the promises ever at hand. What is it to me, though I have a thing in the house, if I have it not at my need? Now, for the Lord's sake, let me entreat thee be wise for thy poor soul. There is many a fainting-fit comes over the heart of many a poor Christian, persecutions without, and sorrows and corruptions within; therefore keep thy cordials about thee, and be sure to have them within reach; take one, and bring another, and be refreshed by another, and go singing to the grave, and to heaven for ever.

CHAP. VII.

The growing of the Soul with Christ.

HITHERTO of the first part of the soul's implantation; to wit, of the putting the soul into Christ. We are now come to the second, which is, the growing of the soul with Christ. These two take up the nature of ingrafting a sinner into the stock, Christ Jesus. Now this growing is accomplished by two means:

1. By an union of the soul with Christ.

2. By a conveyance of sap or sweetness (all the treasures of grace and happiness) that is in Christ, to the soul.

First: Every believer is joined unto Christ, and so joined and knit, that he becomes one spirit. 1. He is joined, as a friend to a friend, as a father to a child, as a husband to a wife, as a graft to a tree, as a soul to a body. So is Christ to a believer; "I live, yet not I, but the Lord Jesus liveth in me." 2. So joined, that the believer comes to be one spirit with Christ: this mystery is great, and beyond the reach of that little light I enjoy; only I shall communicate what I conceive, in these three conclusions: 1. That the Spirit of God, the third person in the Trinity, doth really accompany the word, but more especially the precious promises of the gospel. 2. The Spirit, accompanying the promise of grace and salvation, doth thereby leave a supernatural power, a spiritual and overpowering virtue, upon the soul, and thereby brings it unto Christ: it is not so much any thing in the soul, as a spiritual assisting, and moving, and working upon the soul, by virtue whereof it is moved and carried to the Lord Jesus Christ. 3. The Spirit of grace in the promise, working thus upon the heart, causeth the heart to close with the promise, and with itself in the promise; and this is to be one spirit.

This may shew us that the sins of the faithful are grievous to the blessed Spirit; not only because of mercies, bonds, and engagements, which the believer hath received, but because a man is come so near to Christ and the Spirit, as to be one spirit with Christ. What, lodge an unclean spirit with a clean spirit of the Lord! The Holy Ghost cannot endure this: *Let no fleshly communication come out of your mouth,* Ephes. iv. 29. Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, because by it you are sealed unto the day of redemption: the good Spirit of the Lord hath sealed you unto redemption, and knit you unto himself; and will you rend yourselves from him, and grieve him? O grieve not the holy Spirit.

Secondly: As there is an union with Christ, so there is a conveyance of all spiritual grace from Christ, to all those that believe in him: 1. There is fully enough in the Lord Jesus Christ for every faithful soul. 2. As there is enough in Christ, so Christ doth supply or communicate whatsoever is most fit. 3. As the Lord doth communicate what is fit, so he doth preserve what he doth bestow and communicate. 4. As the Lord doth preserve what he communicates, so he quickens the grace that he now doth preserve; and in the end he crowns it all.

Hence we see whither the saints of God should go, to fetch supply of whatsoever grace they want, yea, increase and perfection of what they have already. Christ is made all in all to his servants: why then, away to the Lord Jesus; he calls and invites, "I counsel thee to buy of me eye-salve." If thou be an accursed man, buy of Christ justification; if thou be a polluted creature, buy of Christ sanctification: *With thee is the well-spring of life,* saith David, *and in thy light we shall only see light.* It is not with us, but with thee; it is not in our heads, or hearts, or performances, 'tis only in Christ to be found, only from Christ to be fetched. I deny not but we should improve all means, and use all helps; but in the use of all, seek only to Christ; with him is the well of life. Away to Christ; wisdom, righteousness, all is in him, and there we must have them.

You will say, What are the means to obtain these graces from Christ? I answer: First, eye the promise daily, and keep it within view. Secondly, yield thyself, and give way to the stroke of the promise, and to the power of the Spirit. For instance, imagine thy heart begins to be pestered with vain thoughts, or with a proud haughty spirit; you must not be discouraged; no, but eye the promise, and hold fast thereon, and say, Lord, thou hast promised all grace unto thy servants, take therefore this heart, and these affections, and let thy Spirit frame them aright according to thy own good will: by that Spirit of wisdom, Lord, inform me; by that Spirit of sanctification, Lord, cleanse me from all my corruptions; by

that Spirit of grace, Lord, quicken and enable me to the discharge of every holy service. Thus carry thyself by the power of the Spirit of the Lord, and thou shalt find thy heart strengthened upon all occasions.

For conclusion, to dart this use deeper into your hearts: If every believer be joined with Christ, and from Christ there be a conveyance of all spiritual graces unto every believer; then above all labour for Christ in all things: never let thy heart be quieted, never let thy soul be contented, until thou hast obtained Christ. Grace indeed is good, and duties are good: seek for all, we should do so; perform all, we ought to do so; but oh! Christ in all, above all, more than all. Thus I have shewed you the way to the Lord Jesus; I have shewed you also how you may come to be implanted into the Lord Jesus: and now I leave you in the hands of a Saviour, in the bowels of a Redeemer; and I think I cannot leave you better.

THE

PRACTICE

OF

SANCTIFICATION:

EXEMPLIFIED IN

THE BELIEVER'S PRIVILEGES AND DUTIES.

THE BELIEVER'S PRIVILEGES.

THE ENTRANCE.

YOU have heard the doctrine, precepts, and the pattern of a man in his second, or new birth: now remains what follows all his life; and therein,

1. His privileges——2. His duties.

1. His privileges, as he is now a believer in Christ, are—Justification,—Sanctification,—Glorification.

The first privilege which immediately follows our union with Christ, is justification.

A man may be said to be justified either virtually, or actually; either in Christ, or in himself.

1. Virtually, in Christ: and this is from the day of Christ's passion, and in the virtue of his satisfaction; yet this intendeth no more but that satisfaction is made, and remission purchased, by the blood of Christ.

2. Actually, in himself: when a man hath the possession of justification, immediately after his union with the Lord Jesus Christ. Now this justification, considered as it is a state of favour with God, which a man at his first believing is put into, is not reiterated; yet the particular acts of pardon, and imputations of Christ's righteousness, are continually by God communicated unto the believer. In this respect this actual justification, or particular acts of pardon, hath its degrees of progression: the beginning thereof is laid in our first union with Christ; the consummation of it is not till the Judge at the last day hath solemnly pronounced the sentence of final absolution. Between these, there is a progressive work of justification, by the constant actings of the Spirit applying the blood of Christ by faith, to the quiet and comfort of the

soul; the first we may term initial justification, the second progressive, the last perfective: the first is wrought and sealed in the first sacrament; the second is wrought and sealed in the second sacrament; and both these branches of sacramental justification are to us the pre-assurance of that perfect justification.

It hath been commonly said by some of our best divines, that justification is transacted in our first incorporation into Christ; at which time, it is conceived that the pardon of all sin is sealed to the believer at once. But I fear the misunderstanding of this point hath laid the ground, upon which some build that unhappy structure, which turneth the grace of God into wantonness. Who knoweth not that justification, according to the scripture, is the act of a judge pronouncing a judicial sentence, wherein he absolveth the person of the sinner from all sin and punishment due to him for sin, and that for the alone righteousness of the surety, Christ, freely imputed, and by faith received of him? And according to this, I suppose we shall not err if we say, 1. That a work of justification is even as yet to us future, viz. at the last day, when we shall receive a final discharge, and when God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes: and yet, 2. That in our first union with Christ there is a work of justification, viz. actual imputation of Christ's righteousness, and actual remission of all sin, or of what sin for the present the soul stands guilty of, at once, or at that time when it is first united to Christ. I dare not say, that justification is one individual act; or that all sins, past, present, and to come, are remitted to the believer at once; but this I say, that in our first union, all our sins, past and present, are actually pardoned; and this favour received, is a pledge of assurance, that in future also, by applying ourselves to Christ, we may receive the forgiveness of our daily sins, and that at the last day we shall at once be absolved from all accusations laid in against us, and that justification, besides those particular acts of pardon, and imputation of Christ's righteousness, doth note a state of grace, and reconciliation with God, for the imputed righteousness of Christ.

And *being justified by faith, we have peace with God;* that is, Christ's righteousness being imputed, and sins pardoned, we have peace with God; not only peace from God in our consciences, but peace with God in our reconcilement to him, and in his favour towards us. This reconciliation consists in two things: 1. In our peace with God, whereby the Lord lays by all acts of hostility against us: 2. In the love and favour of God; he now loves us, not only with a love of good-will, but with a love of complacency and delight. Oh! consider what a blessed state this is!

Adoption follows reconciliation; whereby the Lord accounts us sons: *Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.* The Lord accounts us just in our justification, friends in our reconciliation, sons in our adoption: now this adoption is either begun in this life, or perfected in the world to come, when we shall receive all the privileges of sons.

Sanctification follows adoption: no sooner are we sons, but we receive the image of our heavenly Father in sanctification; the manner of it is thus:

1. The Spirit works in us a principle of spiritual life: the scripture sometimes calls it a seed, sometimes a spring or fountain, sometimes the life of Christ, because it is conveyed unto us by the Spirit of Christ, by means of our union with Christ. What name soever we give it, we may not conceive it to be a new faculty added unto those which are in men by nature, but an improvement of those abilities to work spiritually, as they did naturally before regeneration; hence it is that a regenerate man in scripture is said *to walk after the Spirit,—to be led by the Spirit,—to walk in the Spirit.*

2. From this fountain spring all those habits of spiritual grace, which are severally distinguished by the name of faith, hope, love. Although, to speak properly, they are but the diversifications of that spiritual principle within us, distinguished by these names.

3. From these habits of grace abiding in us, proceed spiritual motions and operations. And as it is with natural habits, so it is with spiritual; they are much increased and strengthened by the use and exercise of them, and are as much weakened by disuse and neglect of such an exercise.

The excellency of this privilege appears in these particulars:

1. This is our glory and beauty, even glorification begun: what greater glory than to be like unto God? We are *changed into the same image, from glory to glory:* every degree of grace is glory; and the perfection of glory in heaven consists chiefly in the perfection of grace.

2. This will give us abundance of sweet peace. From whence come troubles, and doubts of God's favour and love? Is it not some guilt or decay here? is it not our secret dalliance with some known sin? On the other side, what was Paul's rejoicing? Hezekiah's peace? The one cried, that in all sincerity and simplicity he had his conversation among men; the other, Lord, remember I have walked before thee uprightly: not that this was the ground of their peace, (for that only is free grace in Christ) but the means of their peace: that is a cursed peace, that is kept by looking to Christ, and yet loving our lusts.

3. By this we have comfortable evidence of our justification: nor is this a running upon the covenant of works;—is not sanc-

tification, the writing of the law in our hearts, a privilege of the covenant of grace, as well as justification? and can the evidencing of one privilege by another, be a running upon the covenant of works? Oh! consider, how many evangelical promises are made to persons invested with such and such graces; as of poverty, mourning, meekness. And to what end, but that every one may take, and be assured of, his portion manifested particularly therein? Surely none are justified, but they are sanctified; or if not sanctified, they are not justified.

Glorification is the last in execution of God's eternal purpose: and herein we are made partakers of those endless and unutterable joys, which neither eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard, nor the heart of any man conceived.

OF DUTIES IN GENERAL.

SECT. I.

Of the Equity of Duties.

No sooner is the soul translated into the state of grace, and crowned with those glorious privileges, but immediately it cries out, O Lord, what shall I do for thee? how shall I live to thee? Good reason the soul should now give up herself to Christ, for she knows she is not her own, but Christ's. Can there be such a heart in any Christian, as to continue in sin, because so much grace hath abounded? Oh no! *The love of Christ constrains us,* saith the apostle, *because we thus judge,—that he died for all, that they which live, should not live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.* There is a principle of love in the hearts of believers, and this love of Christ constrains them to live to Christ: *Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Christ, who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.*

SECT. II.

Of the Insufficiency of Duties.

But, alas! what are these duties to my Lord? Or what are these duties in themselves?

1. All the duties of man are nothing at all unto God: *Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise can be profitable unto himself? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or is it a gain to him, that thou makest thy ways per-*

fect? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he from thine hand? All the service of men and angels, though they run parallel with the longest lines of eternity, are no sufficient recompense for my soul's deliverance; when we have done all, still we must say, we are unprofitable servants.

2. All the duties of man, are in some respect sinful: "Christians may distinguish between that which is the Spirit, in works after renovation, and the whole work after they have done it: now although the motions and assistance of the Spirit be pure, holy, and without skum, in the spring, (to wit, in itself,) yet by that time these motions and assistances have passed through the channels of their hearts, and have been mixed with their manifold corruptions in doing, even the whole work thereby becomes polluted. If this be so, that our best recompense to Christ for his loves be unprofitable to him, and sinful as done by man; what shall I say? how must I carry myself to my Redeemer?

SECT. III.

Of the Healing of Duties.

I DARE not but obey; though all the duties in the world are insufficient to recompense those bowels of God's mercies in Christ, I must not therefore cast away duties. It is true, I cannot but sin in all I do, my best duties are tainted and mingled with sin: but will it follow, that because I cannot be more clean, therefore I must be more filthy than needs? Nay, O my soul, if thou art married to that bridegroom, Christ, duties and all things else are clean to thee. There is an healing of duties, if we be in Christ. Certainly that fruit which cometh from a root of faith, must needs be good fruit. *I believe, therefore I speak,* saith the Psalmist: O my soul, canst thou say, I believe, therefore I pray; I believe, therefore I sanctify the Lord's day; I believe, therefore I do all duties of obedience. Thy obedience then is the fruit of paradise, for it grows on the very tree of life. Christ is the sun of righteousness, that ariseth with healing in his wings: Christ is that sun, that by his heat of love extracts all the sin out of thy duties, and so thy duties are healed; the spiritual part of them being presented by the intercession of Christ, and the defects covered by the righteousness of Christ.

2. But how should I know that Christ thus takes my duties and heals them, and mingles them with his own incense, and carries them in unto God the Father?

Didst thou never find a spiritual fire come down, as it were, upon thy heart, in duty, or after duty? In the times of the Old Testament, if they offered up a sacrifice, and a material fire

came down from heaven, and burnt up the sacrifice, it was a certain testimony that the sacrifice was accepted: now, in the times of the gospel, we must not expect material fire to come down upon our duties; but hath the Lord at any time caused an inward and spiritual fire to fall down upon thy heart, warming the spirit in duty? there the Lord speaks thus much to thee, that thy sacrifice is turned into ashes, and it is accepted by Jesus Christ.

This fire issues from the blood and intercessions of Christ, our great High-Priest; it is the efficacy of his blood, and power of his glorious intercession, that, when thou feelest any good in duties, doth at that very instant prevail with God the Father for what thou feelest: say then, Do I now in this ordinance, or in this duty, feel my heart warmed, or savingly affected? Oh! I see the Lord Jesus, who sits in glory at the right hand of God, now remembers me a poor worm on earth; now I feel the fruit of his Spirit, power, grace, comfort, presence, sweetness; now I taste, I drink, I enjoy, and am abundantly satisfied with, his rivers of pleasures; and if this presence of Christ be so sweet, what is himself then? O my soul, if ever thou dost relish the blood and Spirit of Christ upon thy spirit in duties, go thy way, and give glory to God.

SECT. IV.

No Resting in Duties.

And yet be wary, O my soul! It was Luther's saying, "Take heed, not only of thy sins, but also of thy duties." Couldst thou desire and pray till heaven and earth shook, till thou hadst worn thy tongue to the stumps; couldst thou fast till thy skin and bone cleave together; couldst thou purpose with resolution to be better; couldst thou reform thy heart, head, life, tongue, some, nay all sins; couldst thou live like an angel, shine like a sun, walk up and down the world like a distressed pilgrim; couldst thou die ten thousand deaths; lie in hell so many millions of years, as there are piles of grass on the earth, or sands on the sea-shore, or stars in heaven; I tell thee, not one spark of God's wrath against thy sins can be quenched by all these duties, nor by any of these sorrows or tears.

It was Austin's saying, though it sounds harsh, "That repentance damns more than sin;" meaning, thousands did perish by resting therein.

But how shall any man know that he rests in his duties?

By these signs following:

1. It is a sign that a man rests in his duties, if he never found it a hard matter to come out of his duties: if thou canst not tell the time when thou didst rest in duties, and didst groan to be

delivered from these entanglements, thou hast just cause to fear.

2. It is a sign that a man rests in duties, if he exceedingly prize the bare performance of duties: those duties that carry thee out of thyself unto Christ, make thee to prize Christ. Now tell me, dost thou glory in thyself? Dost thou say, I was before ignorant, hard-hearted; but now I understand better, now I can sorrow for my sins, I can pray with some life? Alas, poor soul! these things do argue only the Spirit of God breathing on thee, not dwelling in thee. If thou restest here, if thou thus enhancest the price of duties, then do I pronounce from God, that thou dost rest in duties: *Those things,* saith Paul, *I accounted gain,* i. e. before his conversion, *but now I account them loss.* This is the reason why a child of God, commonly after his prayers, doubts much of God's love towards him; whereas another man, that falls short of him, never so much as questions his estate: the first seeth much vileness in his best duties, and so judgeth meanly of himself; but the other is ignorant of any such vileness, and therefore esteems highly of them.

3. It is a sign that a man rests in his duties, if he never came to be sensible of their poverty, and utter emptiness of any good in them. Didst thou never feel thyself in this manner? Oh! I am ignorant as any beast, as vile as any devil; what a nest of sin and rebellion works in my heart? I once thought, at least my heart and desires were good; but now I feel no spiritual life. O dead heart! I am the poorest, basest, and blindest creature, that ever lived! If thou ever feelest thyself thus, thou never camest out of thy duties.

4. It is a sign that a man rests in his duties, if he gain no evangelical righteousness by duties, i. e. if he prize not, desire not, delight not in union with, the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence a child of God asks himself after sermon, after prayer, after sacrament, What have I gained of Christ? Have I got more knowledge of Christ? more admiring of the Lord Jesus Christ? Have my affections been raised, my graces acted, my soul refreshed with the delights of Christ? On the contrary, a carnal heart, that rests in his duties, asketh only, what have I done? *I thank God,* saith the Pharisee, *I am not as other men are,* &c.—so, I pray, and hear, and reform, and sorrow for sin, therefore I shall be saved. No such matter: let a man have a bucket of gold, doth he think to get water because he hath a bucket? No, no, he must let it down into the well, and draw up water with it: so must thou let down all thy duties into the Lord Jesus Christ, and draw life, and light, and grace, from his fulness, otherwise thou shalt perish without Christ. Oh! that the ministers of Christ would become sons of thunder in this matter! Many have had experience of Christ's enlarging the common

gifts of his Spirit; but what have they felt of Christ's renewing, sanctifying, and healing their lusts? Oh! it is far more comfortable, to find Christ's power melting thy heart for sin, mortifying thy lusts, quickening thee to holiness, than to find ten thousand enlargements in holy performances.

SECT. V.

Of the Use and Ends of Duties.

And canst thou not, O my soul, be saved by thy duties? To what end then shouldest thou pray, or hear, or sorrow, or repent, or meditate, or examine? I answer,

1. That hereby you may express obedience to God's will: *Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, in every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*

2. That God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may be honoured by the performance of these duties: *Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit.* Abraham believed, and gave God glory. So we should pray, and meditate, and hear, and all should tend to the glory of God.

3. That duties may be as evidences of God's love to them who are in Christ Jesus: they cannot save, but they let the soul in to Christ, and follow and accompany such a man as shall be saved. Duties bring you in to Christ, and are evidences when you are in Christ, that the Lord and mercy is yours; even as at the sacrament, the elements of bread and wine are outward signs to bring Christ and the heart together. Indeed, the heart must not rest in these signs; but when the soul is let in to Christ, then faith must let go the outward elements, and treat immediately with the Lord Jesus. So grace and duties are inward signs; and while men make use of them only as signs and means to let them come in unto Christ, and their rejoicing is not in them, but in Christ, their confidence is not pitched upon them, but upon Christ, there will be no danger at all in making such use of signs; neither is it more derogatory to free grace, or to Christ's honour, for God to make such effects signs of our union with him, than it was to make outward signs of his presence: it's true, these are not full testimonies, without the Spirit of Christ.

4. That they that exercise duties may obtain the promises *Godliness is profitable unto all things,* saith the apostle, *having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come* There are many promises scattered up and down in the word; and hereby if God be not a debtor unto thee, yet he is to himself, and to his own faithfulness.—Thou, Lord, payest debts, and owest none: it was free for thee, before thou hadst pro-

mised, whether to give me heaven, or no; but now the word is out of thy mouth, I use duties as means, though I adhere only to thee, and to thy faithfulness, who hast promised." Duties are considered, first, as services, in respect of the command; and secondly, as means to obtain blessings at God's hands, in relation to his promise: now most in the world perform duties as acts of obedience only, and so rest in the present performance; but if we do them in faith, we should have an eye to the promise, and look on duties as means to obtain some mercy, yea, salvation itself, at God's hands, Phil. ii. 12. Rom. x. 10. 2 Cor. vii. 10. 1 Pet. i. 9.

But is not this to be saved by duties?

No: for herein we speak not of duties originally, but instrumentally, and with relation to the Lord Jesus Christ; not as meritorious causes, but as subordinate means of our salvation in the name of Christ: the best of duties, in their own natures, are but mere empty pits, and dry channels, though never so curiously cut out; but Christ fills them.

5. That these duties may turn to our comforts. Not so as to put confidence in them, to take comfort from them, as causes; that cannot be, for who can look upon any thing he doth with that boldness? but as the testimony of God's love to us, and as the means of consolation. Thus Hezekiah, not as a proud Pharisee, but as a thankful acknowledger of what was in him, prayed, *I beseech thee, O Lord, remember me, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.* We may therefore take comfort from duties, not so as to rest in them, but as a means, and so as to praise God thereby.

6. That others might receive good, and glorify God. *These things are good and profitable unto men,* saith the apostle; and, *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.* Christ doth not here encourage vain-glory, but he propounds the true ends of our visible holiness. There is an exhortation to wives, so to walk that their husbands may be won to the Lord: sweet soul, it may be thou prayest for thy husband in a carnal condition; thou desirest him to go to hear such a minister, such a sermon: go on in these duties, adding this to the rest—see that thy life also may convert him.

7. That duties may carry us to the Lord Jesus Christ: he alone is *able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him,* i. e. in the use of the means. Hear a sermon, to carry thee to the Lord Jesus; fast and pray, and get a full tide of affections in them, to carry thee to Jesus Christ, i. e. to get more love of him, more acquaintance with him, more union in him, and communion with him: use thy duties as Noah's dove did her wings, carry thee to the ark of the Lord Jesus Christ.

where only there is rest: if she had never used her wings, she had fallen into the waters; and if she had not returned to the ark, she had found no rest. So, if thou shalt use no duties, but cast them all off, thou art sure to perish; and if they convey thee not to Christ, thou mayest lie down in sorrow.

8. That the Lord Christ may be exalted, and advanced by duties. The main end of duties, is the glory of him who hath redeemed us with the price of his blood, and the power of his Spirit; this sets the crown on his head. How many perform duties, not to set the crown on Christ's head! But this is the main end of right obedience, that the crown may be set on Christ's head, that he who is King of saints, may have the honour given him due to his kingly office. O my soul, in respect of all those ends, use and exercise duties; but be sure of Christ in all, above all, more than all: O let Christ have the crown set on his head, give him all the glory. Cast not away duties, but cast them down at the feet of Jesus Christ, as the twenty-four elders cast their crowns, saying, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things,* (all duties,) *and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*

And yet let me warn you of one dangerous snare: some think, if they fetch in their comfort by duties, as by prayer, meditation, &c. that then it would be a comfort only of their own hammering out, and not the genuine joy of the Holy Ghost. A desperate mistake! they set the workings of God's Spirit and their own spirit in opposition; when their spirits must stand in subordination to God's: God's Spirit usually works our comforts, by setting our own spirits awork upon the promises, and by raising our thoughts to the objects of our comforts. And yet I deny not, that if any should so think to work out his comforts by meditation, prayer, reading the word, as to attempt the work in his own strength, and do not all in subordination to God, and the Spirit's assistance, the comfort will be nothing but vanity, a comfort indeed of their own hammering out.

SECT. VI.

Of the essential Requisites in Duties

But what are they we call duties? or what are those essential requisites in duties? Many by duties intend nothing but that which is external, as, coming to the church, and receiving of sacraments.

I answer, these are like clothes upon a dead man, that cannot warm him, because there is no life within. The soul of all duties is that which is internal; in which respect three ingre-

dients are necessary, viz. 1. that they be from God, 2. through God, and 3. to God.

1. From God: it is of the very essence of a duty, that it be commanded by God. Look to this in thy duties; know the commands, and do them because they are commanded; if thou dost them, and yet knowest not that God commands them, this is no true obedience; or if thou knowest they are commanded, but yet dost them not because they are commanded, neither is this obedience to God. In all duties, rightly performed, there must be a knowledge of, and an eye to, the will of God, Rom. xii. 2. Eph. v. 17.

2. Through God, i. e. 1. Through the Spirit, who doth spiritualize them. 2. Through Christ, who presents them, and makes them acceptable to God.

(1.) Through the Spirit of God: now the Spirit works on our spirits to the performance of our duties; and therefore look, how much there is of the holy Spirit in duty, so far it is sanctified, so far it is accepted, and no further. *God is my witness,* saith Paul, *whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son.* In every service we perform, our spirit, stirred up by God's Spirit, must needs have a hand in it, or it is but the carcase of a right service: the soul, will, and affections, must go together with our duties, (that I mean by our spirit,) or the vitals are wanting. If a man come to confess his sins, and yet slights them inwardly in his heart; if a man pray for reconciliation with God, and yet have no longing in his heart after it; if he ask grace, or the spirit of mortification, and yet his heart doth not inwardly seek it;—he prays not in the spirit, and therefore God will not accept it.

(2.) Through Christ: for Christ perfects, perfumes, and presents our duties to his heavenly Father: As duties come from us, they savour of flesh, but the angel of the covenant mingleth incense with them, and so he offers them upon the golden altar which is before the throne. Here is sweet comfort, O my soul! what though thy duties are weak, and cold, and confused; yet through Christ they are enlivened with his intercessory Spirit; through Christ they are perfumed with the precious odours of his fresh bleeding merits and blessed mediation, and so they are made acceptable to God, that he may receive them.

Observe here a double intercessor:

One is the Spirit, that helps our infirmities:

The other is Christ, that makes them acceptable to God.

3. To God: that is, to set forth his glory; for as his name is blasphemed when we walk in wickedness, so it is glorified in doing our duties. This is the end of all our duties, indeed of all our doings: *Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.* One duty sanctifying Christ in the heart, is more than a thousand. Young Christians, it may be,

do more works, but not in works of grace; the more evangelical our works are, the more to God, the better they are: *We are of the circumcision, who rejoice in the Lord Jesus, worship God in the Spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh.*

OF SELF-DENIAL.

SECT. I.

Of the Nature of Self-Denial.

SELF-DENIAL is a total, thorough, utter abnegation of a man's own ends, counsels, affections, and a whole prostration of himself, and of all that is his, under Christ Jesus. And thus we have the meaning of Christ, *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself; i. e.* let him lay aside his own wisdom as an empty lamp, his own will as an evil commander, his own imaginations as a false rule, his own affections as corrupt counsellors, and his own ends as base and unworthy marks to be aimed at. Let him deny himself, whatsoever is of himself, within himself, or belonging to himself, as a corrupt and carnal man; let him go out of himself, that he may come to me; let him empty himself, that he may be capable of me, and that I may reign and rule within him. As in Joseph's dream, the sun, moon, and the eleven stars, did obeisance to him, and all the sheaves in the field to his sheaf; so, in the regenerate man, all the supernatural gifts and graces, all the moral endowments and abilities, all the natural powers and faculties, of the soul, with all the members of the body, and all the labours of the life, and whatsoever else, must do obeisance, and be made subject unto Jesus Christ. And this is true self-denial

SECT. II.

Of the Denial of Sinful-self.

FIRST, we must deny sinful-self, and this we are to deny simply and absolutely, whether it be the whole body of corruption and concupiscence, or those personal corruptions which we in our particulars are more notably carried unto.

1. We are absolutely to deny the whole body of corruption and concupiscence: we are to mortify and subdue, to crucify and to revenge the blood of Christ against this sin. This is the meaning of the apostle: *Mortify your members which are upon earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil*

concupiscence.——Now for the denying or mortifying of this concupiscence, observe these directions:—

1. Be sensible of it, cry out, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

2. Endeavour we to get a willing heart to have this sin mortified.

3. Be we peremptory in denying the requests of concupiscence, bar up the doors, give it no audience: so Christ gave Peter a peremptory denial, when he would have persuaded him from his passion, saying, *Get thee behind me, Satan.*

4. Take we pains to mortify this sin. *I run not in vain, as one that beats the air:* that is, I take pains, but not in vain; I take no more pains than I must needs; if I took any less, I could not come to that I aim at: the less pains we take in subduing this corruption, the more will it increase; we must use the means God hath appointed, as the word, and praying, and fasting, and watching, and weeping, and mourning; to these I may add covenants and vows; provided that, 1. they be of things lawful; 2. that we esteem them not as duties of absolute necessity; and, 3. that we bind not ourselves perpetually, lest our vows become burdens to us; and if we will vow, let us but vow for a time, that when the time is expired, we may either renew or let them cease, as necessity requires.

5. Labour we to get the assistance of the Spirit of Christ. *The wind bloweth where it listeth;* i. e. the Spirit worketh where it listeth; yet this hinders not, but that the Spirit may list to blow in the use of the means.—Surely there are means to get the Spirit, and to hinder the Spirit; the Spirit may be won or lost, in the doing, or not doing these things:—

1. If we would have the Spirit, then we must know the Spirit; we must so know him, as to give him the glory of the work of every grace: the want of the knowledge of Christ's Spirit is the very reason why men receive not the Spirit. The first means to have the Spirit, is to know the Spirit, that we may give him the glory of every grace.

2. If we would have the Spirit, take heed that we *quench not the Spirit;* I mean not, by quenching the Spirit, a quite putting of it out: but 1. a growing careless and remiss in the duties of religion: 2. a not cherishing every good motion of the Spirit in our hearts.

3. If we would have the Spirit, take heed that we grieve not the Spirit; let us not drive him by our sins out of the temples of our souls, disturb him not in his gracious and comfortable operations there, but so demean ourselves that he may stay in our spirits, and manifest, without any eclipses or interruptions, his sweet and powerful presence within us.

We are absolutely to deny those personal corruptions which we are more notably carried unto. Now for the denying and

mortifying of this sin, whatsoever it may be, observe these directions:—

1. Labour we to see the disease: no man will seek for cure, except he see the disease; the sight of the disease is half the cure of it. Endeavour we to find out what is our special sin.

2. Abstain we from all beginnings and occasions of this sin: quench it at first; if we cannot put out a spark, how should we put out a flame? If we get not the mastery over the first motion to sin, how shall we overcome it when it is brought to maturity?

3. Turn we our delights to God, and Christ, and heavenly things: there is no true self-denial, that is only primitive; a man cannot leave his earthly mindedness, but presently he must be heavenly-minded: as a man cannot empty a vessel of water, but presently air will come in its place; so a man cannot deny sinful-self, but grace will immediately enter, and take possession of his heart. And Oh! when it is thus, when the intentions of our mind, which we spent upon vanities, are now drawn into prayer and meditations, then lusts wither.

4. Labour after further discoveries of Christ. Believe more, and depend more upon Christ; yea, let us trade immediately with Christ, for Christ is the only agent in the work of self-denial. Mistake not; I do not say that we are mere passives in self-denial; in our progress we are workers together with Christ: and therefore it is said, that we purge ourselves, and that we purify ourselves, and that we by the Spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh, because Christ still, in going on to purge us and mortify our lusts, doth it by stirring up our graces, and useth therein acts of our faith, and love, and many motives and considerations, to do it. Let us therefore use all means required, but above all let us bring our hearts to be more and more acquainted with Christ.

SECT. III.

Of the Denial of our external Relations.

Secondly, we must deny natural self; and this we must deny only conditionally, and upon supposition of God's call.

1. We are conditionally to deny our external relations; to this purpose saith Christ, *If any man cometh to me, and hateth not father, and mother, and children, and brethren, and wife, and sisters—he cannot be my disciple.* Not that religion teaches or endures a saint to break the ties of religion or nature; you see it puts in a plea against such unnaturalness, *Honour thy father and mother.*

Relations are the blessings of God; they are God's gifts, and

bestowed on the saints in a way of promise. They are the loving tokens which Christ sends to our souls, that so he might draw our loves to him again; and hence it is lawful and commendable to rejoice in them in their way, and especially to lift up our souls in thanksgiving to God for them; for every creature of God is good, (much more the children of our loins, and wives of our bosoms,) if received with thanksgiving.

Yet we must deny them for God in these cases,—

1. If they retard us in the way to Christ, if they entice us to make haltings in our runnings through fire and through water to the Lord Jesus. If our dearest relations should beckon us out of the way, or retard us in the way, to Jesus Christ, we must not respect father or mother, we must not acknowledge our brethren, nor know our own children. And Christ gives the reason: *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.* A man should love father and mother, and a man will love son and daughter, for love descends rather than ascends; but if any man love father, or mother, or son, or daughter, more than Christ, he is not fit to be a disciple of Christ.

2. If they draw contrary ways; Christ drawing one way, and relations drawing another way. In this case, as Christ said, *If a man hate not father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.* If any man hate not, *i. e.* if a man renounce not all carnal affection, if a man be not disposed, where these loves are not compatible, to hate father, and mother, and all, for the love of Christ, he cannot belong to Christ. These two cases may be summed up thus: if our relations do either retard our way to Christ, or draw us from Christ, in this sense they ought to be forgotten.

The directions of self-denial, in respect of our relations, are these:

1. Let us have them, as if we had them not; this is the expression of the apostle: *The time is short; it remains that both they that have wives be as though they had none, and they that weep as they that wept not, and they that rejoice as if they that rejoiced not.*—1. The time is short: the apostle here alludes to seafaring men, that have almost done their voyage, and begin to strike sail, and are even putting into the harbour; so it is with us, our time is short, as soon as we begin our voyage, we are ready to strike sail.—2. It remains that both they that have wives, be as though they had none, &c. *q. d.* You that are ready to cast anchor, trouble not yourselves about these things, but rather be ye stedfast, gird up the loins of your minds, let your care be the greatest for heaven; and as for these outward relations, be as if you had none, or think as soon as you are ashore

you shall have none; do not glut yourselves, but moderate your hearts in all such comforts as these.

2. Let us resign up all to God. This we have done, and this we must do still.—1. This we have done, in that day when we made our bargain for Christ. Every soul that comes to Christ, parts with all to buy that pearl; and in selling all, he sells not only his corruptions and lusts, but his father, mother, wife, children, all relations, conditionally.—2. This we must do still; we must give up all to God; we and they, and all, must be at the command of Christ, at the pleasure of God and Christ: indeed nothing is properly called our own, but God and Christ; all other things are God's gifts, lent of God, and therefore, as occasion is, we must give up all to God again.

3. Let us imitate them, as occasion is, who for Christ's sake have actually parted with their dearest relations.

Thus did Galeacius Caracciolus, the noble marquis of Vico. Vico was one of the paradises of Naples; and Naples was the paradise of Italy; and Italy is the paradise of Europe; and Europe the paradise of all the earth. Yet this marquis being brought to hear a sermon of Peter Martyr's, God pleased so to work upon his spirit, that he began to enter into serious thoughts, whether his way of popery, wherein he was trained, was right or not.—At last, having further light let into his soul, his resolutions were strong to leave the court, and his honours, together with his father, wife, and children, and whatsoever was dear to him. Many grievous combats he had betwixt the flesh and the spirit when he resolved on his departure, but the greatest troubles were his relations: for—

1. As often as he looked on his father, which he almost did every hour, so often he was stricken at the heart with unspeakable grief; his thoughts ran thus: 'What! and must I needs forsake my dear and loving father? and cannot I else have God my father? Oh! unhappy father of my body, which may stand in competition with the Father of my soul?'

2. No less was he grieved in respect of his wife; for, having no hope that she would renounce popery, and go with him, he resolved also for Christ's sake to leave her, and to follow Christ; whereupon his thoughts ran thus: "And shall I forsake my wife, the only joy of my heart in this world, and that not for a time, but for ever!—How many doleful days, how many waking nights, will she pass over?—"

3. There was yet a third care, and that was for his children; which were six in all. It was the more grief, in that they were so young, as that they could not conceive what it was to want a father. The eldest was scarce fifteen, and the youngest scarce four years old; towards them his thoughts ran thus: "Shall I within these few days utterly forsake these sweet babes, and leave them to the wide and wicked world, as though they had

never been my children, nor I their father?—Poor orphans: what will become of you when I am gone? Your hap is hard, even to be fatherless, your father yet living!—Yet thus must I leave you all, weeping and wailing one with another, and I, in the mean time, weeping and wailing for you.

Thus resolved, he left his family, and went to Geneva; who was no sooner gone, but his friends and family were so astonished, that nothing was heard or seen amongst them but lamentations. By his father's commands, and his wife's entreaties, he was persuaded to see them once, and take his journey from Geneva to Vico: having stayed a while, and now ready to return to Geneva, his father, at his farewell, gave him many an heavy and bitter curse; his wife embraced him, and took him about the neck, beseeching him in a most loving and pitiful manner, that he would have care of himself, of his dear wife and children, and not so willingly cast them all away: his young children, all upon their knees, with arms stretched out, and hands holden up, and faces swoln with tears, cried out unto him to have pity on them, his own bowels, and not to make them fatherless before the time: his friends, with heavy countenances and watery eyes looked on him, and though for grief they could not speak, yet every look, and every countenance, and every gesture, was a loud cry and a strong entreaty that he would stay, and not leave so ancient and noble a house in such a desolate case. But above all, there was one most lamentable sight:—Among his children he had one daughter of twelve years old, who crying out amain, and wallowing in tears, fell down, and catching fast hold about his knees, held him so hard that he could by no means shake her off; and the affection of a father wrought so with him, as he could not offer with violence to hurt her: he laboured to be loose, but she held faster; he went away, but she trailed after; crying to him, not to be so cruel to her his own child, who came into the world by him. This so wonderfully wrought with his nature, that he thought, as he often reported, that all his bowels rolled about within him, and that his heart would have burst presently, and he should instantly have died. But notwithstanding all this, being armed with a supernatural fortitude, he broke through all those temptations, and for Christ's sake denied all, and so returned to Geneva.—A glorious self-denial, or a glorious denier of his natural-self!

SECT. IV.

Of the Denial of our Special Gifts.

We are conditionally to deny our special gifts and endowments; as learning, wisdom, power, or any other abilities of mind and body.

Indeed, learning, wisdom, abilities, are in themselves excellent things. Æneas Silvius said, "That if the face even of human learning could but be seen, it is more beautiful than the morning star." How much more may be said in respect of divine learning, whose subject is God, and Christ, and the things of God? In this respect therefore we must not deny them.

Yet we must deny them in these cases,—

1. In respect of any high thoughts of our own excellencies: *Be not wise in your own conceit,* saith the apostle; to which agrees that of Solomon, *Lean not thine own understanding.*

2. In respect of any use of them according to the world. Of this God speaketh when he saith, *I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.* Thus the apostle triumphed, saying, *Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?* Worldly wisdom usually scorns the great mysteries of godliness, foolishness of preaching, simplicity of the saints; but this *wisdom descendeth not from above,* saith the apostle, *this wisdom is but earthly, sensual, devilish.*—1. Earthly; it minds only earthly things.—2. Sensual; it prefers the pleasures of sense, and pleasing the appetite, before the peace of conscience and sense of God's favour.—3. Devilish; for it imitates the devil in contriving the mischief and ruin against the glory of God, the plantation of his grace in the hearts of men: or it is devilish, because the devil usually sets those on work that have a little more wit to do him service; he knows they are more able and active to quarrel, rail, slander, disgrace the truth of God, or ministry of Christ.—O poor souls! how do you bark and snatch at those hurtless hands, which would heal and bind up your bleeding souls! O poor idiots! what wisdom is it for you to endeavour their extirpation, who are as stars in the right-hand of Christ! They that would do Christ's ministers any deadly harm, they must pluck them thence.

The directions of self-denial in respect of our special gifts, are these:—

1. Think we soberly of ourselves, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. We are not sober, in the apostle's phrase, if either we take that upon us which we have or brag of that which we have.

2. Mind the true ends of learning, wisdom, abilities. What are those ends? 1. To do God more excellent and more glorious service. 2. To furnish the soul for an higher degree, and a greater measure, of sanctification.

3. Endeavour to walk before God in lowliness of mind. What! are thy gifts more eminent than others? It is the Lord that makes thee differ; and as God hath been favourable to thee, so

should his favours be as obligations to obedience, humility, meekness.

4. Remember, it is not the greatness, but the well-using of the gift, that is the glory of the receiver. It is not the having any thing, whether much or little; but the having of Christ with it, that makes it full and satisfactory.

5. Observe and weigh well, that the issue of all depends not upon the abilities of man, but upon the all-disposing hand of God. *The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; neither yet bread to the wise, nor riches to men of understanding.* All our abilities are under God's providence, who puts an efficacy into man's abilities, even as he pleaseth.

6. Esteem we all abilities, gifts, knowledge, as dung and dross, in comparison of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, our Lord. All knowledge, art, learning, is nothing to Christ; there is no excellency in that man's knowledge that knows not Christ. If we know not Christ, it is nothing, if we know never so much. If we know Christ, it is enough, though we know nothing more; enough indeed, for in knowing him we have all knowledge. In Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Among wise men, he is the choicest that knows most of Christ; it is Christ that puts a fulness into our knowledge, as the shining of the sun in the air puts a fulness of light into the eyes; hence Paul made Christ crucified, the centre and circumference of his knowledge, the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, of his knowledge; this was the full latitude of his knowledge, to know Jesus Christ: and this is excellent knowledge, excellent for the author, matter, subject, fruits, and effects of it; this is saving knowledge, this is life eternal, to know thee, and him whom thou hast sent. Oh! never speak of learning wisdom, gifts, abilities, in comparison of Christ. Bernard could say, "If thou writest, it doth not relish with me, unless I read Jesus there; if thou disputest or conferrest, it doth not relish with me, unless Jesus sound there." All learning is but ignorance in comparison of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. Come then, and down with all knowledge in this respect; come, and submit to that true, spiritual, experimental knowledge of Jesus Christ.

SECT. V.

Of the Denial of our Worldly Profits.

We are conditionally to deny our common ends, which naturally men pursue and seek after, as profit, pleasure, and honour. I shall begin with the first.

It must be granted that worldly profits, such as houses, lands, possessions, are a blessing of God, because they serve for the refreshing, comforting, supporting, of our frail weak bodies, while we live in this world.

Yet we must deny them in these cases :—

1. As temptations and snares ; when they are either baits unto sin ; or when they are the fruits and wages of sin. Thus Zaccheus denies himself in all his unjust gain which he had gotten. Restitution, as it is a most necessary, so it is one of the hardest parts of self-denial. Unjust gain is like a barbed arrow, it kills if it stay within the body, and pulls the flesh away if it be drawn out.

2. As oblations and sacrifices ; when Christ calls us to dedicate them unto him, then we must deny them. Thus when Abraham was called from his country into a land which he knew not ; and when Daniel was called from a king's court to a den of lions ; when Moses was called from the honours of Egypt, to the afflictions of God's people ; immediately they consulted not with flesh and blood, but willingly left their own comforts to obey God's commands. All we are, or have, we have it on this condition, to use it, to leave it, to lay it out, to lay it down, unto the honour of our Master, from whose bounty we received it.

The directions of self-denial in respect of our worldly profits, are these :—

1. Look we on worldly profits as vanity, nothing. *Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not,* says Solomon ; *for riches certainly make themselves wings, they fly away as an eagle.*— Observe first, that riches are not, they are nothing ; those things that make men great in the eye of the world, are nothing in the eyes of God.—2. Observe, the Holy Ghost would not have us so much as set our eyes upon riches, they are not objects worth the looking on.—3. Observe with what indignation he speaks against those that will set their eyes upon them : wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not ? As if he had said, what a vain, unreasonable, senseless thing is this ?—4. Observe, that he says, their parting from us is by way of flight, that is, a sudden, swift, and irrecoverable motion.—5. Observe, that this flight is by the wings of an eagle, which of all birds hath the most sudden, the most swift, and the most irrecoverable motion.— 6. Observe, that none needs to put wings upon them to fly away, for they make themselves wings ; there is matter enough in themselves to put them into a flight. Oh that the glory of the world were darkened in our eyes, as one day it shall be, that it might not be so dear unto us as it is !

2. Consider them as instabilities, uncertainties. All worldly things are like the sea, ebbing and flowing ; or like the moon, always increasing or decreasing ; or like a wheel, always turning up and down Such a story we have of Sesostris, king of Egypt,

who would have his chariot drawn with four kings, and one of them had his eyes continually on the wheel; whereupon Sesostris asked, what he meant by it? He answered, It put him in mind of the mutability of all earthly things, "For I see," said he, "that part of the wheel, which is now up on high, is presently down beneath; and that part which is now below, is presently up on high:" whereupon Sesostris being moved, considering what might be his own estate, would never have his chariot drawn after that manner any more.

3. Consider them as snares and thorns. To this purpose cried Solomon, *All is vanity and vexation of spirit.*—Worldlings! do you not feel this true? Mark but how your worldly cares do rush upon you in the morning as soon as you awake; mark but how they accompany you in the day; mark but how they follow you to your beds at night; mark but how they hinder your sleeps, and afflict you in your dreams: Oh! what fears! what suspicions! what undermining one another! what disappointments! what vexations! what a clutter of businesses crossing one the other! what snares and temptations lie in your way at every hand! You walk all the day long upon snares; upon dangerous snares, that bring much sin and guilt, and will bring much sorrow and misery.

4. Consider them as fading in regard of use, which yet prove eternal in regard of punishment. Oh! what a dreadful noise is that in hell!—we have lost eternity, for setting our hearts upon things that were but momentary. What will be thy thoughts at the hour of death? It may be these: Now are all my hopes at an end, now I must bid farewell to all my comforts, I shall never have mirth any more; the sun is set, the season is at an end for all my comforts; now I see before me a vast ocean of eternity, and of necessity I must launch into it: O Lord, what provision have I for it? Oh, there is a thought that will rend the heart in pieces! Oh, what a dreadful shriek will that soul give, that sees before it that infinite ocean of eternity, and sees no provision made for it! What will it think, but here is an ocean of hot scalding lead, and I must launch into it, and I must swim naked in it for ever and ever? I know not how this word may work, but if it be trampled under foot, it may be within this year or two, it will be said of thee, Such an one was at such a sermon, or read such a book, and learned that worldly profits were but momentary; but now he is gone: Or it may be thou wilt say on thy death-bed, Such a book I read, that all worldly profits were but momentary, and that I had not only a river to swim over, but an infinite ocean to launch into, and yet I would not be warned; and now my season is gone, and I am launching into eternity, the Lord knows what will become of me.

5. Appear for God and his cause, his truth and people, though the issue may seem dangerous. Thus Esther did with that brave resolution of her's, *If I perish, I perish.* Oh! let not a good

cause be dashed and blasted, and none have a heart to appear for it, for fear of worldly profit.

6. Let all go, rather than commit any sin: it is better to want all the profits that earth can afford, than to lose the delights that a good conscience will bring in. Oh! let the bird in the breast be always kept singing, whatsoever we suffer for it; it is better we lose all we have, than to make shipwreck of a good conscience; in this case we must be willing to lose all, or else we are lost in the enjoyment of all.

SECT. VI.

Of the Denial of our Worldly Pleasures.

THE next common end which men naturally pursue, and which we must deny, is pleasure.

'Tis true, some pleasures are lawful, and, in a sober, moderate, seasonable use of them, serve for the refreshing, comforting, and supporting of our frail bodies. Yet we must deny them in these cases.

1. When they are baits to draw us into sin.

2. When they are sin, or the concomitants of sin, or the fruits and wages of sin.

The directions of self-denial, in respect of worldly pleasures, are these:—

1. Look on pleasures, not only as vain, but as vanishing: they are soon gone from us, or we are soon gone from them. 1. They are soon gone from us, *the fashion of this world passeth away:* all pleasures are but like a mountain of snow, that melts away presently. 2. We are soon gone from them; it is but a while, and then we and all our pleasures must together vanish; if death draw the curtain, and look in upon us, then we must bid a farewell to them all, never laugh more, never have merry-meeting more; never be in jollity any more. Oh! when we are called to eternity, then all our delights will leave us, and bid us adieu for ever; and how doleful will this be to all the sons and daughters of pleasure! your season is done, you have had your time, it is gone, it is past, and cannot be recalled.

2. Consider, this is not the season that should be for pleasure. The apostle James lays it as a great charge upon those in his time, *that they lived in pleasure upon earth.* This is a time to do the great business for which we were born. Oh! did we think that eternity depended upon this little uncertain time of our lives, we would not say that sensual pleasures were now in season. Surely this time should be spent in seeking to make our peace with God; this is a time of suing out our pardon, of mourning, and sorrow and trouble of spirit, and no time for jollity, and fleshly

delights. If a condemned man had two or three days granted him that he might sue out his pardon, were that a time for pleasure and sports? Thus it is with us; the sentence of death is upon us, only a little uncertain time is granted us, to sue out a pardon; let us know then what is our work, and let us apply ourselves to it.

3. Ponder the carriage of the saints before us. You know the mean provision that John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, had; his fare was locusts and wild honey, and yet there was not a greater born of woman before. Timothy, although he was sickly, yet would not take liberty to drink a little wine, but only water, till Paul wrote to him; and in that liberty there was but little granted, and that for his stomach's sake, and his often infirmities. Basil, in an epistle to Julian, mentions the mean fare he and others with him lived on; they had no need of cooks, all their provision was the leaves of plants, and a little bread: and Hierom reports of Hilarion, that he never ate any thing before the sun went down, and that which at any time he ate was very mean: and Hierom himself lived so abstemiously, that he had nothing daily but a few dried figs with cold water.

4. Do we for Christ, as Christ hath done for us. What! was he content to part with the pleasures of heaven, the bosom of his Father, to redeem poor man? and shall not we part with the pleasure of a little meat or drink for him? Is not all his glory, revealed in his word and work, sufficient to shew him worthy of our loves, and to make us willing to part with such empty, poor, slight things, as sensual pleasures? Surely the daughters of pleasure must undress, if ever they will be beautiful in Christ's eyes; their ornament must not be the outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, and putting on of apparel, but the hidden man of the heart, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

5. Meditate on those pleasures above, and say, (you that have the experience of the pleasantness of God's ways,) If the nether springs be so sweet, what will the upper be? If the lower Jerusalem be paved with gold, surely that upper Jerusalem is paved with pearls! It is an excellent speech of Bernard, "Good art thou, O Lord, to the soul that seeks thee; what art thou to the soul that finds thee? If grace be pleasant, how pleasant is glory?" Therefore the saints die so pleasantly, because there is a meeting of grace and glory: grace is delightful, glory more delightful; but when both these meet together, what delight will there then be!

SECT. VII.

Of the Denial of our Honour, Praise, good Name, among Men.

The next end which naturally men pursue, and which we must deny, is honour, praise, good name.

We grant, honour, praise, good name, are the gifts and blessings of God. David speaketh expressly, *Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all.*

Yet we must deny them for God, in these cases :—

1. When they are as snares and baits unto sin. And in all those, honour, praise, good name, there are dangerous snares; how prone do they make a man to those sins of vain-glory, self-admiration, self-estimation! Surely it is a great mercy of God if any man be preserved from these sins, that enjoys those blessings!

2. When we are called by God to dedicate them to God. The Lord never gave us these things, honour, praise, good name, upon any other terms, but that we should be willing to part with them for the honour of his name; God never made us owners, but stewards of them for his service, and if ever we were brought to Christ, into covenant with God in him, we then resigned up all to him, we professed to part with all for him. And good reason, for whatsoever honour or excellency we have, it is he that gives it :—the rainbow is but a common vapour, it is the sun that gilds it, that enamels it with so many colours : the best of us are but a vapour; and if any of us be more glorious, more honourable, than others, it is the Lord that hath shined upon us, and hath put more beauty, more lustre upon us, than upon other vapours.

The directions of self-denial in respect of our honour, favour, grace, good name, among men, are these :—

1. Look on honour, praise, favour, applause, as vanity, nothing. *Vanity of vanities,* saith the preacher; *vanity of vanities, all is vanity.* Observe his expression; 1. *Vanity,* not only vain, but vanity itself. 2. Excessive vanity, for it is *vanity of vanities.* 3. An heap of vanities, for it is in the plural number, *vanity of vanities.* 4. *All is vanity,* not only profit, and pleasure, but honour too; Solomon had experience of them all, and *all is vanity.* There is no reality in honour, praise, favour, applause of men, which are so much admired and magnified; honour is but a shadow, a fancy, a wind, a breath; there is no internal excellency in it.

2. Beware of those attendants, or companions of honours; vain-glory, self-love, self-admiration. Let us not be desirous of vain-glory : let us not exalt ourselves above others : let us not study to be magnified by others : let us not please ourselves in the applause of others. It is not human applause, but God's

approbation, which ministers matter of true honour to a Christian. We should rejoice to see God honoured, but fear to hear ourselves applauded, lest either we be idolized, or God's honour obscured.

3. Be convinced, that of all vices, vain-glory, self-admiration, hunting after men's praise, are the most invincible. The roots thereof are so deep and strong, and so largely spread in the heart of man, that there is no disease in the soul so hardly cured, no weed in the garden of man's heart so hardly plucked up.

4. Let us herein conform ourselves to Christ. He came from the bosom of his Father, and from that infinite glory he had with him before the world was. He left the honour which he might have had from all the angels, and all to save poor wretched sinful creatures: he that was equal with God, so emptied himself that he became man; nay, he was made a scorn of men, he made himself of no reputation, he came in the form of a servant, he was made a curse, as if he had been the vilest of men living; and yet this was the honour of Christ himself, because it was all for God. Oh! then, who is he that knows any thing of Jesus Christ, that can think it much to lay down all his honour for him? What can be more unworthy, what more detestable, than that a man should magnify himself after he had seen God humbled. It is intolerable impudence, that where majesty hath emptied himself, a worm should be puffed up.

5. Let us submit to the meanest service of our God, though it darken our honours, never so much in the eyes of the world. Thus Hierom writ to Panachius a young nobleman, that he would have him to be eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, hands to the weak, yea, if need were, to carry water, and cut wood, and make fires; for what are all these, saith he, to bonds, buffetings, spittings, whippings, death?

6. Let us willingly join with those of lower degree in any way of honouring God. *Mind not high things*, saith the apostle, *but condescend to men of low estate*. Who knows but that the poorest creature may be far more honourable in the eyes of God and of his saints, than we? Where greater graces sit below us, let us acknowledge their inward dignity.

7. We must bear our reproaches wisely. Though we should not be insensible, yet we should not take too much notice of every reproach. But how then should we stop their mouths? I answer: 1. Let us walk innocently; innocency will overcome all in time. 2. Let us labour to be eminent in that which is quite contrary to that we are reproached for. Perhaps you are reproached for a dissembler, labour for the greatest eminency of plainness and sincerity: perhaps you are reproached for covetousness, labour to be eminent in liberality, in heavenly mindedness, in doing good.

8. We must bear reproaches patiently. What are we? or

what is our names, that we should think much to bear reproach? Consider, have not other of God's servants, far holier than we are, been under exceeding reproach? Nay, how is God and Christ reproached? how is the name of God slighted? how is the majesty, and sovereignty, and authority of God contemned in this world? what reproaches endured Christ in his own person, in his preaching? how was he contemned when he preached against covetousness? The Pharisees scorned him: the word signifies they blew their noses at him. He was called a devil, a Samaritan, a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners; what worse can be imagined than was cast upon Christ? they spat on his face, that blessed face of his, that the waves of the sea were afraid of, and that the sun withdrew his light from, as not being fit to behold it; they put thorns on his head, and bowed to him in reproach. This argument should, methinks, move us to bear reproaches patiently.

9. Make we our moans to God, and lay our case before him, as Hezekiah (when Rabshakeh came and reviled God and the people of God) went and spread the letter before God; if we can but do likewise, we shall find unspeakable refreshments to our souls, and that will be a great argument of our innocency. *My friends scorn me,* saith Job, *but mine eye poureth out tears unto God.—The mouth of the wicked,* saith David, *and the mouth of the deceitful, are opened against me; but I give myself unto prayer.*

10. We must bear reproaches fruitfully. Christians should not think it enough to free themselves from reproach, but they must improve it for good; and to that end—

1. Consider what ends God aims at by it, and labour to work them upon ourselves.

2. Draw what good instructions we can from the reproaches of others, as thus: when I hear men reproach and revile,—Oh what a deal of evil is there secretly in the heart of man, that is not discovered till it have occasion! Again, do I see another so vigilant over me, to find out any thing in me to reproach me,—How vigilant should I be over myself, to find out what is in me to humble me!

SECT. VIII.

Of the Denial of our Life for Jesus Christ.

I HAVE done with the denial of natural self in regard of well being, I now consider the denial of natural self in regard of very *being*, and so it imports our life, together with the faculties and powers of nature, our understanding, will, affections, senses, fleshly members; all within us must be captivated to

Christ, and all without us must endure to suffer for the name of Christ.

1. The understanding must be captivated, as it hinders from Christ. Suppose the word of Christ be contradicted or checked by reason. In this case I must deny my reason, and believe Christ; I must captivate my understanding to the obedience of faith.

2. The will must be renounced in reference to Christ. Servants must not follow their own will, but their master's directions; how much more ought we, who always may justly suspect ourselves, and can never suspect the will of Christ. It is meet that Hagar should stoop to Sarah, our will to Christ's will.

3. Our affections and senses must be denied, as they are cherishers of evil, or opposers of good. This latter is that crucifying of the flesh, with the lusts and affections, which the apostle mentions. But all these being within the compass of natural life, I shall only insist on that.

Life, as it is the gift, so it is the blessing, of God; hence the promise of life, and of long life, is made to obedient children; and this, turned into prayer by the believing parents, is usually called by the name of blessing.

Yet we must deny it for God, in these cases:—

1. As a sacrifice. If God will rather be honoured by death than life, by the sufferings than by the services, of his saints, in this case we should be willing to submit to God. Thus many of the martyrs who had opportunity of flight, yet tarried to witness the truth, and gave their lives to the flames.

2. As temptation. Thus, rather than sin, the primitive Christians, when apprehended, chose willingly to die. And if it be on this condition that we may avoid sin, that by losing life we may go to Christ, in whom we shall find, with an infinite overplus, whatsoever we can lose for his sake; then we must deny life itself.

The directions of self-denial in respect of our natural being, or life, are these:—

1. Apprehend God's love to our souls in his Son: he thought nothing too good for us, *God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son;* and this he did for us, when we were enemies; nay, God hath not only given us his Son for a Saviour, but he hath given us himself for an husband; let us often by sad and solemn meditation renew the sense of his love to us in Christ, and we cannot but give up all we have, and all we are, to God.

2. Maintain a godly jealousy of our own hearts; for want of this, all the disciples fainted, especially Peter, and shamefully denied Christ. Memorable is that story of Pendleton and Sanders: Sanders, as fearful he should not endure the fire; Pendleton seemed resolute, "Be not fearful,' saith he to Sanders, "for

thou shalt see me, and this fat flesh of mine, fry in the fire before I will yield." Yet he that was so strong in his own strength, fell away; and the other, so fearful, was enabled by God to burn for his truth.

3. Be acquainted with the promises of self-denial; have always a word at hand to relieve ourselves in the worst of sufferings. Now these promises are of several sorts.—1. Of assistance,—2. of acceptance,—3. of reward. And again, the promises of reward are,—1. of this life; *He that forsakes all for Christ, shall receive an hundred fold;* the joy, the peace he shall have shall be an hundred times better than the comfort of these outward things. 'Oh! but,' may some say, 'what will become of my children? I shall leave them fatherless and helpless.' To this, by way of answer, God often styles himself *the Father of the fatherless,* and if of any fatherless, then surely of those whose parents have lost their lives for Jesus Christ. *Leave thy fatherless children,* saith the Lord, *I will preserve them alive, and let thy widows trust in me.*—2. Of eternal life; such shall inherit eternal life. "Be of good comfort," says Bradford to his fellow martyr, "we shall have a merry supper with the Lord this night."—Christians! what would we have? The soul indeed is of a large capacity, all things here below can never satisfy it; but eternal life, the inheritance above, will fill the understanding with knowledge, and the will with joy; and that in so great a measure, that the expectation of the saints shall be exceeded; for he shall be admired of them that believe.

4. Mind the principle that must carry us through death, and make death itself honourable. We read, Heb. xi.—that *by faith some quenched the violence of fire.—Others were tortured.—They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted, they were slain by the sword; and all this by faith.*—Faith is the grace that enables us to deny ourselves, yea, life itself; other graces may do much, but faith hath the principal work in this. *By faith ye stand,* said the apostle to his Corinthians: it is faith that makes a man stand in his greatest trials; and therefore when Christ saw how Peter should be tempted, he tells him, that he had *prayed that his faith should not fail;* noting, that while his faith held, all would be sure.

SECT. IX.

Of Self-denial, even with regard to the Graces of God.

NOTWITHSTANDING these are God's special gifts, yet we must deny them comparatively, and in some respects:—

1. In point of justification. It is a dangerous thing to hang the weight of a soul upon any thing which hath any mixture of

weakness, imperfection, or corruption in it, as the purest and best of all our duties have; it is a dangerous thing to teach that faith, or any other evangelical grace, as it is a work done by us, doth justify us: there is nothing to be called our righteousness, but *the Lord our Righteousness*. Faith itself doth not justify habitually, as a thing fixed in us, but instrumentally, as that which receives the righteousness of Christ shining through it upon us; as the window enlightens by the sun-beams which it lets in, or as the cup feeds by the wine which it conveys. So then, in point of justification, we are to renounce all our duties and graces.

2. In point of sanctification: for we are to attribute the glory of all our graces and duties unto Jesus Christ, and nothing to ourselves. And yet understand we aright, though every believer is thus to deny himself in spiritual things, even in the point of sanctification, yet he is not to speak evil of the grace of God within himself: he may not miscall his duties and graces, saying, these are nothing but the fruits of hypocrisy, for then he should speak evil of the Spirit, whose works they are; neither is he to trample on those graces of God. For a man to say, all this is nothing but hypocrisy, that is not self-denial; properly, self-denial in spiritual things, as to the matter of justification, is, to renounce all; and as to the matter of sanctification, it is to attribute the strength and the glory of all unto Jesus Christ, and nothing to one's self.

The directions of self-denial in this respect, are these:—

1. Let us be sensible of, and humbled for, our pride in spiritual things. There is nothing that a Christian is more apt to be proud of than spiritual things. It was Mr. Fox's speech: "As I get good by my sins, so I get hurt by my graces." It is a dangerous thing to be proud of man's duties and spiritual gifts; we had better be proud of clothes, or friends, or honours; for this pride of spiritual things is directly opposite to a man's justification. The first step to humility is, to see one's pride; the first step to self-denial is, to be convinced of one's desire after self-exalting, self-admiring, self advancing.—O what a proud heart have I! What a self-advancing heart have I!—There is no believer, till he is fully renewed, but what hath something of self. We had need therefore to be jealous of ourselves; and if at any time self break out, if at any time the soul begins to be advanced in regard of duty or spiritual things, let us fall down before God, and humble ourselves for—the pride of our hearts.

2. Have Christ in your eye.—The more we see an humble Christ, a self-denying Christ, the more shall we learn humility and self-denial. Christ was the most eminent example of self-denial that ever was. *He thought it no robbery to be equal with God; and he humbled himself, and took upon him the form of a servant*. Was there ever such a self-denial as this?—Christians!

consider your Christ, and the more will you learn even in spiritual things.

3. Rest not on any thing below Jesus Christ. Neither grace, nor duties, nor holiness, are to be trusted in. We must hold them fast in point of practice and obedience; but it is our sin and danger to hold them fast in reliance and confidence.—I desire to be rightly understood in this truth: Some, because they need not rely on duties, let go their duties; they let prayer, and repentance, and sorrow for sin, go; they say, it is no matter for duties, they need not to trouble themselves, Christ hath done all. This is to turn the grace of God into wantonness: we must let go both our graces and duties in point of justification, but hold them we must as our lives. Prayer, hearing, fasting, repenting, must not die whilst we live; do them we must, but glory in them we must not: we must not rest in any thing whatsoever below Jesus Christ.—I shall instance in these particulars:

1. We must not rest upon our own preparations for duties. It is a commendable thing to prepare our hearts; we must pray that we may pray; we must have secret communion with our God, before we come to seek communion with him in a sermon: but we must not rest upon our own preparation when we have prepared; if we advance that into the throne of Jesus Christ, and rest upon that when we should only rest upon him, it is the way to make all our preparations miscarry.

2. We must not rest upon our enlargements in duties.—It may be we have a spring-tide of assistance comes in; a minister preaches with great presence of the Spirit of God, and a saint prays (as we find it) in the Holy Ghost: *i. e.* he finds the holy Spirit of God sending him from petition to petition, melting with brokenness when he is confessing sin, filling him with rejoicing when he is remembering mercy, raising him with an high wing, as it were, of importunity, when he is begging of favour; and now as soon as the duty is done, it may be, he goes away, and strokes himself,—'O what an admirable prayer was here! surely I shall do well this day!'—This is the very way to miscarry, thousands have found it; so that when he comes to pray again, it may be, he prays most dully and flatly; the Spirit is grieved and gone, and he can say little or nothing.

3. We must not rest upon the comforts we have in duty, or after duty. It may be, when we have been at duty, and have had some ravishments; Oh! now we think our nest is built very high, and our rock is firm, and we shall go on vigorously. Chrysostom hath a saying to this purpose, "Methinks," saith he, "a saint, when he comes from a sacrament, should be able to fly in the face of a devil; and though he walk in the midst of snares, yet he should be able to encounter with them all." Comforts are very sweet things, and indeed strengthening things: *The joy of*

the Lord is our strength, saith Nehemiah. Nothing more animates the soul than joy; only here is the danger, if we rest on these joys and comforts; the Spirit of God is a most choice and tender thing, it dwells in none but a clean, pure temple.

4. We must not rest upon graces. This was Peter's fault; he had grace, and he rested on it, *Lord, though all forsake thee, yet will not I;* yet soon after Peter did forsake and deny his Master: and we do not find Peter so confident afterwards. When Christ said to him, *Simon Peter, lovest thou me more than these?* no comparative words now; no more than, *Lord, thou knowest I love thee.*

5. Be often putting forth new faith in Jesus Christ. Self-denial in spiritual things is not to be found in the law, but in the gospel: the law, though it hath its use, and we dare not but use it, yet it will not make a man deny himself, but rather seek himself, in spiritual things: 'Obey and live,' saith the law, 'but if thou failest in any one point, thou art lost for ever.' In this case, if there were no other way, who would deny his own righteousness? Nay, who would not seek to save himself by his own righteousness? 'But now,' saith the gospel, 'by works thou canst not live; but if thou wilt throw down all thy own righteousness at the feet of Christ, and believe on him, and rest only on him, thou shalt be saved.' This will make a man deny his own righteousness, and deny himself in spiritual things. Go we therefore to Christ, let us maintain believing apprehensions of the Lord Jesus Christ. He alone is the humble, self-denying person, that seeks justification, not by works, but by faith only.

6. Let it be the joy of our souls to exalt and set up Christ within our souls. Though in order to justification we must deny our graces, eye Christ without us; yet in order to sanctification we must have a care to see and feel Christ's kingdom within us, to set up Christ in our hearts, and to discern him ruling and commanding there, as a king in his throne. And there is true self-denial in this, for wherever Christ reigns, there sin goes down. As the people would have all men put to death, which would not have Saul to reign over them; so doth a true believing soul mortify whatsoever opposeth Christ's kingdom: he removeth whatsoever may hinder Christ's spiritual dominion, he makes all stoop for Christ's exaltation within him. O then let Christ reign over all within us: in our understandings, as a prophet enlightening us; in our wills, as a king commanding us; in our affections, as a priest mortifying us; in our loves, as a husband marrying us; let the whole man be subject unto the whole Christ. This is the character of a true self-denier; Christ rules within him, he every way subjects himself to Christ:—in his understanding, to know Christ; in his will, to choose Christ; in his thoughts, to meditate upon Christ; in his fear, to serve and honour Christ; in his faith, to trust and depend upon Christ;

in his love, to affect Christ; in his joy, to delight in Christ; in his desire, to long after Christ; in his endeavours, to exalt Christ; in all his duties, graces, gifts, abilities, to make them serviceable unto Christ: this is to attribute the glory of all our duties and graces to Jesus Christ, and nothing to ourselves. Now is Christ all in all; now we truly deny ourselves.

OF THE LIFE OF FAITH.

SECT. I.

Of the Nature of the Life of Faith.

To live by faith, is, by faith in Christ, to possess the whole word of God as our own in all states and conditions, resting quietly upon his gracious and faithful promise, and yielding ourselves unto his good pleasure, in sincere, universal, and constant obedience: or, to live by faith, is to feed upon the several promises of God made in his word, and to apply them to our ownselves, according to our needs; and so to uphold, comfort, and encourage ourselves against all temptations, and unto every good duty. This life of faith is a very heaven upon earth, a sweet sanctuary to any hunted soul; hereby our hearts will be cheered, our life will be sweet to us, God will be glorified, and the glory of his truth advanced. O blessed duty!

That we may live by faith, we must endeavour two things,

1. To get matter for our faith to work upon.

2. That we may provide matter for our faith to work upon, we must observe three things: 1. That we store up all the good promises of God, and our own experiences.

2. That we lay in promises of all kinds. We had better leave than lack: it is the wisdom of a man, that he may not live feebly and poorly, but to have somewhat to spare.

3. That we so lay them up, that we may have them at hand. It is a folly to say, "I have as good provision as can be, but I have it not here." *Let the word of God dwell in you plenteously and richly in all wisdom.*

That we order our faith aright in the work, observe these directions:

1. Take possession of the promises, and value them as our own. There is no godly man or woman but is a great heir. Whensoever they look in God's book, and find there any promise, they make it their own; just as an heir that rides over divers fields and meadows, saith, 'This meadow is my heritage, and this corn-field is my heritage.' And then he sees a fair house, and saith, 'This fair house is my heritage.' And he looks upon

them with another manner of eye than a stranger that rides over those fields. A carnal heart reads those promises, but merely as stories, not as having any interest in them; but a godly man, every time he reads the scriptures, (remember this when you are reading the scriptures,) and there meets with a promise, ought to lay his hand upon it, and say, 'This is a part of my heritage; it is mine, and I am to live upon it.'

2. Expect nothing from the promise, but that which is suitable to the nature of it. Some promises are absolute, which God hath simply determined to accomplish; as the promise of the Messiah, Isa. vii. 14. and of the calling of the Gentiles, Rom. xi. 26. Some promises are conditional, which God will accomplish in his own time, and in his own manner and measure; they are no farther promised, than God seeth to be most meet for his glory and our good; as all temporal blessings, less principal graces, and the measure of all sanctifying graces: now in all these expect nothing from them, but that which is suitable to the nature thereof.

3. Eye that particular good in the promise which we stand in need of, and set God's power, and faithfulness, and wisdom awork, to bring it about: for instance, thou art in persecution, and either thou wouldst have deliverance out of it, or comfort and refreshment in it; in this case see all this in the promise, (referring the order, and time, and manner, to God,) and then set God's power and faithfulness awork that can do it, and his wisdom awork to contrive it which way he knows best: this is the meaning of that text, *Commit thy ways unto the Lord, trust in him, and he shall bring it to pass.*

4. By faith wait upon God, in that way he hath appointed. It is true, God will work that good for us, yet we must use the means, and meet God in the course of his promise, otherwise we live not by faith, but tempt God, and throw away his promises and all.

5. Set it down, that God will do whatsoever he hath promised, and we shall receive it in the ways of his providence: this is the very work of faith itself; thus it draws sap and virtue from the promise, when it concludes, that according to the good in the promise, it is sure to be done.

6. But imagine the Lord doth not suddenly accomplish, then must faith take up its stand, and stay till it come: he that believeth, maketh not haste, the vision is for an appointed time, and therefore wait for it. So the Psalmist, *As the eyes of a servant look to the hands of his master, and the eyes of a maiden to her mistress, so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until he have mercy upon us:* not until we will, or until we see fit, but until he will have mercy upon us.

7. Imagine the Lord not only delays, but seems to frown, and to say, He will not hear. In this case, with an holy humi-

lity contend with God, for the Lord loves to be overcome thus. When Jacob wrestled with God, *Let me go,* saith the Lord: *I will not let thee go,* saith Jacob. So do we catch the Lord Jesus, and strive with him, and leave him not, till we have those comforts he hath promised. Surely this is the glory, and victory, and triumph of faith, when the Lord is, as it were, fain to lay down his weapons, and to yield himself as conquered: *Thy name shall be no more called Jacob, but Israel; because thou hast prevailed with God.*

SECT. II.

Of the manner of this Life of Faith in particular, as in temporal Evils.

In particular, that we may live by faith, observe we—

1. The promises.
2. The exercise of faith concerning the promises.

We begin with temporal evils; and, concerning them, first give you the promises; and secondly, the exercise of faith in the respect of those promises.

1. The promises to prevent afflictions, you may read in the word, and they are these, and the like: Psal. xci. 10. Psal. cxxi. 7. Job v. 19. Zech. ii. 5. where the Lord promiseth, *to be a wall of fire to his people;* (not of stone or brass, saith Theodoret,) that it may both fray afar off, and keep off at hand; protect them, and destroy their enemies.

2. The promises to qualify evils, are these, and the like: Psal. ciii. 13, 14. Isa. xlix. 13, 14, 15. Hos. xi. 8, 9. In this last promise, God imitates parents, says Theodoret, when any misery is upon their child, their bowels yearn more; never sits the child so much on the mother's lap, never lies so much in her bosom, as when he is sick. Is there, or can there be, any richer or fuller expression of Tully, than there is in the apostle's Greek, where there is both an elegant antithesis, and double hyperbole, beyond Englishing:—for affliction, glory; for light affliction, heavy, massy, substantial glory, a weight of glory; for momentary affliction, eternal glory: nay, the apostle adds degrees of comparison, yea, goes beyond all degrees, calling it *more excellent, far more excellent, exceeding, excessive, eternal weight of glory,* 2 Cor. iv. 17.

3. The promises to bear them, or in due time to remove them. are these and the like: Ps. xxxvii. 24. Jer. xxix. 11. Mic. vii. 8, 9. Ps. xcvii. 11.—As sure as harvest follows seeding, so to the righteous, comfort follows mourning, Job xvi. 20. 1 Cor. x. 13.

1. For sickness: the promises to prevent it are these and the like, Exod. xv. 26. Deut. vii. 15. Ps. xci. 10.

2. Promises to qualify sickness, are these, and the like, Ps. xli. 3. Heb. xii. 6, 7, 8.

3. Promises to remove sickness, are these, and the like, Exod. xxiii. 25. Deut. vii. 15. Isa. xi. 31.

2. For poverty, we may store up these promises, Psal. xxiii. throughout. Ps. xxxiv. 9, 10. xxxvii. 25. Heb. xiii. 15.—The wicked indeed may have more abundance than the Christian, but here is the difference, the wicked hath all by a providence, the Christian hath all by a promise: and this distinction the poor Christian would not part with for a world of gold.

3. For famine, we may store up these promises, Job. v. 19, 20. Ps. xxxiii. 18, 19. Prov. x. 2, 3. Ps. xxxvii. 18, 19. Isa. xli. 17, 18.—Some martyrs being cast into prison, and denied necessary food, they had faith to return this answer, "If men will give us no meat, we believe God will give us no stomach."

4. For war, we may gather up these promises, and the like, Job v. 20. Prov. iii. 24, 25, 26. Jer. xxxix. 17, 18.

5. For captivity, gather in these promises, and the like, Deut. xxx. 3, 4. which very promise Nehemiah sueth out, Neh. i. 9. Ps. cvi. 46. Ezek. xi. 16.

6. For oppression, we have these promises, Ps. xii. 5. lxviii. 5. cxlvi. 7, 8, 9.

2. For the exercise of faith, concerning these promises, that we may live by them, use meditation and prayer.

1. For meditation, consider,

1. That all affliction comes from God:—*Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?—I form the light, and I create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.*

2. That as God sends it, so none can deliver us out of it, but God:—*O our God, wilt thou not judge them? We have no might against this great company that cometh against us, neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee.* This meditation draws the heart from repose in means or friends; it expels vexation and distracting cares, and estrangeth from the use of unlawful means of deliverance: *The horse is prepared against the day of battle, but safety is of the Lord.*

3. The cause of all miseries and sorrow is sin, and therefore it is time to examine our ways, to humble ourselves, and to set upon reformation.

4. That now God trieth our faith, patience, and meekness, He hath said unto crosses, Go ye to such a man, not to weaken his faith, or to waste any grace of the Spirit, but to purge him, refine him, try him, exercise him, to breed the quiet fruits of righteousness. This meditation makes the heart willingly, freely, and constantly, to resign itself to the good pleasure of God in all things.

5. That 'tis God's will we should use all lawful means of help

which God in his providence affords; but in point of dependence, that we solely rest on God's promises. Faith coupleth the means and the end, but looketh to the promiser, (whose truth, and wisdom, and power, and mercy, never fails,) and not to the probability of the thing promised.

2. For prayer, observe this method:

1. Lay open our sorrow before the Lord, pour out our complaints into his bosom.

2. Confess our sins with hatred and godly sorrow; for want of this God threatened the Israelites: *I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offences.*

3. Direct we our supplications to our God: *Lord, how long wilt thou look on?—O rescue my soul from their destruction, my darling from the lions.*

4. Then press we the Lord with his promises: Lord, thou hast said, *The rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous:* thou hast said, *Yet a little while, and the indignation shall cease.* These are thy promises; Lord, make them effectual to my poor soul.

5. For conclusion, tell we the Lord, whatever becomes of us we will trust in him: *Though thou slay me, yet will I trust in thee.*

These are the acts of faith by which it puts forth, and exerciseth itself, in time of affliction.

SECT. III.

Of the Manner of this Life of Faith in Temporal Blessings.

Concerning temporal blessings, the general promises are these, and the like, 1 Tim. iv. 8. Ps. xxxiv. 8, 9. lxxxiv. 11. Phil. iv. 19. 1 Cor. iii. 21.—All things are your's; we are heirs of all the world.

The special promises have a relation, some to our name, some to our bodies, some to our estates, some to our callings.

1. Those promises that have a relation to our good name, are such as these, 1 Sam. ii. 30. Prov. iii. 16. iv. 8. xiv. 19. Isa. lvi. 3, 4, 5.

2. Those promises that have a relation to our bodies, are either for long life, concerning which, Deut. v. 16, 33. Prov. iii. 1, 2.—or for health, concerning which, Prov. iii. 8. Ps. ciii. 3, 4, 5.—or for safety, concerning which, Prov. i. 33. Job xi. 8. Hos. ii. 18. Job v. 23.—or for peace, concerning which, Lev. xxvi. 6. Ps. xxix. 11. xxxvii. 11. Prov. xvi. 16.—or for sleep, concerning which, Job xi. 19. Prov. iii. 24.—or for food, concerning which, Ps. xxxvii. 3. cxi. 5. Joel ii. 26.—or for rai-

ment, concerning which, Deut. x. 18. Matt. vi. 25, 30, 32.—or for posterity, the fruit of the body, concerning which, Deut. viii. 12, 13, 14.

3. Those promises that have relation to our estates, are these, ob xxii. 24, 25. Prov. viii. 18, 19. Ps. xxxvii. 5.

4. Those promises that have a relation to our calling, are either for plenty, concerning which, Prov. x. 4. xii. 11. xiii. 4. xxxviii. 19.—or for protection, concerning which, Ps. xci. 11. or for promotion, concerning which, Prov. xii. 24. xxii. 29.—or for good success, concerning which, Prov. xii. 14. Isa. lxv. 21, 23.—I deny not but the wicked may enjoy all these temporal blessings by a general providence, but only the just have a spiritual right to them; they only have them as encouragements of their righteousness, as testimonies of God's love and care over them, and by virtue of a promise.

2. For the exercise of faith concerning these promises, observe that we may live by them, either in the want, or in the enjoyment of these temporal mercies. In the want of them go we to meditation and prayer.

1. For meditation; consider, if thou return to the Almighty thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put iniquity far from thy tabernacles: *then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks.* This advice faith digests, and labours the reformation of what is amiss, and whatsoever hinders the promises.

2. That faith is painful, provident, and frugal; it shakes off idleness, takes the opportunity, husbands thriftility, and observes God's providence in all affairs; otherwise we live not by faith, but tempt God, and throw away his promises.

3. That faith preserves from the use of all unlawful means. The believer consults ever what is truly just; not what is gainful, or what may be compassed by honest courses, not what may be gained by fraud, deceit, or the like carnal dealings: *Better is a little with righteousness, than great revenues without right.*

4. That faith leans upon the providence of God, who will keep back nothing from us, but what is hurtful and pernicious. Here's a sweet act of faith, it submits to God's wisdom, and rests on his providence, after the use of all lawful means; and this maintains a Christian in true contentment.

2. For prayer, observe this method:

1. Confess our sins, especially those sins which upon search we are persuaded hinders prosperity.

2. Importune the Lord for his temporal blessings, so far as he seeth them to be for our good, and for the glory of his great name.

3. Then press the Lord with his promises, as with so many arguments:—Lord, thou hast said, *Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, as well as that which is to come:*—thou hast said,

Fear the Lord, ye his saints, for there is no want to them that fear him. These are thy promises; make them good to us, as it stands best with thy wisdom.

2. In the enjoyment of these temporal blessings, go we to meditation and prayer.

1. For meditation, consider,

1. Faith, in prosperity, keeps the heart in a holy temper, in humility, meekness, tenderness and compassion towards others; in thankfulness, obedience, and in the fear of the Lord. Satan himself could reply to the Lord, *Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast thou not made a hedge about him?* In this case faith will remind man of his duty, and persuade him to be so much more serviceable, as God's mercies are plentiful upon him.

2. That faith makes a man heavenly-minded in the possession of a prosperous estate; as it receives all earthly blessings from God, so it pulls up the soul to God again: faith considers these things as pledges of God's love, as parts of our child's portion, and so it makes us look at the better part, those never-fading riches which God hath reserved in heaven for all that fear him.

3. That faith breeds a godly jealousy, lest the heart should be drawn away with the pleasing delights of things transitory; for by grace it is that we are conscious of our own weakness, and of the snare that is in every creature to entangle us: prosperity is pleasing, but dangerous; as man may quickly surfeit of sweetmeats. This makes the waking believer circumspect, watchful, and jealous; and suspicious of his own heart, lest he miscarry in prosperity, considering there is a snare in it.

4. That faith minds a change even when our mountains seem strongest.

2. For prayer observe this method:

1. Acknowledge God's mercy both in his promises and performances; say, Lord, thou hast promised, that no good thing wilt thou withhold from them that walk uprightly; and surely thou art true in thy sayings. I believe by virtue of thy promise I enjoy this land, and those goods. I have nothing, Lord, but merely of free grace, and by virtue of a promise.

2. Importune the Lord for sanctification of prosperity, and for God's blessing upon the means: the more we prosper, the more earnest should the prayers of faith be; for of ourselves we have no power to wield a good estate well, no ability to preserve or keep it: in greatest wealth we lie open to many temptations, and if we pray not earnestly that God may sanctify all his temporal blessings to us, we shall cool in grace.

3. Praise God for his mercies, and devote ourselves unto him from whom we have received all.

SECT. IV.

Of the manner of this Life of Faith in Spiritual Evils.

Evils spiritual arise either from the devil, or the flesh, or the world, or from man, or God, or from our own selves.

1. Those evils that arise from the devil, are temptations of several sorts; and the man whose heart is upright, shall find strength enough against every temptation: to that purpose, consider these promises, Matt. xvi. 18. 1 Cor. x. 13. 1 John v. 18.

2. Those evils that arise from the flesh, are lusts or temptations of uncleanliness; and for strength and ability against such a temptation, consider these promises, Prov. ii. 10, 11, 16. Eccl. vii. 26. 1 Thess. v. 23, 24.

3. Those evils that arise from the world, are covetousness, cares, evil company; and for strength against such, consider these promises, 2 Cor. vi. 14, 17, 18. Gal. i. 4. 1 John v. 4. Heb. xiii. 5. There are five negatives together in the original, that strongly affirm; as if he had said, I tell thee, I will never, never, never, never, never, forsake thee.

4. Those evils that arise from men, are either oppositions against truth; concerning which, Matt. x. 19. Acts xviii. 9, 10.—or oppositions against goodness, Matt. v. 10. 1 Pet. iii. 14.—or oppositions against both, and so they fall either on our good name, concerning which, Ps. xxxvii. 6. where, howsoever thy innocency be at some times covered with a thick and dark mist of slander and oppression, yet the Lord will in his good time scatter and dissolve the mist, and so make thy innocency apparent to the world; yea, he will make thy righteousness as evident as the sun when it ariseth; yea, as noon-day, when it is at highest, and shines brightest, Ps. lxviii. 13. Matt. v. 11, 12. 1 Pet. iv. 14, &c.—or they may fall on us in respect of our liberty, concerning which, Ps. lxix. 32, 33. cii. 19, 20. Rev. ii. 10.—or they may deprive us of our goods, concerning which, 2 Chron. xxv. 9. Matt. xix. 29. Hab. iii. 17, 18.—or they may take away life, concerning which, Matt. x. 39. John xii. 25. Rev. xiv. 13.

5. Those evils which arise from God, are desertions; and for comforts against them, consider these promises, Isa. xlix. 14, 15, 16. liv. 7, 8, and l. 10.

6. Those evils that arise from ourselves, are sins and infirmities; and they are either spiritual blindness, concerning which, Luke iv. 18. 1 John ii. 27. Isa. xxxv. 4, 5.—or spiritual lameness, concerning which, Isa. xxxv. 6. and xl. 31 —or heaviness of mind, concerning which, Isa. xxxv. 1, 2. Jer. xxx. 15, 16, 17.—or weakness of memory, concerning which, John xiv. 26.—

or fears of losing God's love, concerning which, Isa. lxix. 15.—and liv. 10. Jer. xxxiii. 20. Psalm lxxxix. 33, 34, 35. John xiii. 1. Rom. xi. 29.—or indisposition, distraction, defects in our best performances, concerning which, Numb. xxiii. 21.—Cant. ii. 14.—or particular falls, daily frailties, and infirmities, concerning which, Isa. lv. 7. Jer. iii. 1. Ps. xxxvii. 24. cxlv. 14. Hosea xiv. 4. 1 John i. 9.

2. For the exercising of faith; concerning these promises that we may live by them, go we to meditation and prayer.

1. For meditation, consider,

1. That of ourselves we cannot resist these spiritual evils; all our comfort is, that neither the devil, nor the world, nor the flesh, nor sin, can oppose any farther than God will give them leave; not the devil himself can tempt who he will, nor how long he will, but in all these he is confined by the providence of God.

2. That faith fortifies the soul against all oppositions; the more they rage, the more faith heartens the soul to believe, and to keep close under the shadow of the Lord's wings: as the child affrighted clings faster to the mother, so the poor soul pursued by the devil, or the world, or flesh, or man, or God, or our own corruptions, runs to Christ, and in his name resists all these evils, and in his name gets the victory.

2. For prayer, observe this method.

1. Confess our sins of former ignorance, vanity of mind, self-confidence, misinterpreting of the Lord's doings, &c. which set open the soul to all other spiritual evils.

2. Importune the Lord for pardon of sin, and for help against all oppositions.

3. Then press the Lord with his promises, as with so many arguments: Lord, thou hast said, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against us; that whoso pleaseth God, shall escape the strange woman; that whosoever is born of God overcometh the world; that if we suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are we; that, *in a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee.* These are precious promises! Now, Lord, make them good to my soul; let me draw the virtue from every of these promises; let not a word of these promises fall to the ground; let me have a share, and part, and portion, in these comfortable promises, through the Lord Jesus.

SECT. V.

Of the manner of this Life of Faith in spiritual Blessings, as derived to us from God and Christ, and the Spirit of Christ.

1. From God proceeds his Love of us—Presence with us—Providence over us.

1. Concerning his love of us, we have these promises, Deut. vii. 7, 8, 13. Isa. liv. 8. Jer. xxxi. 3. Hosea ii. 19. xiv. 4. John iii. 16. Eph. ii. 4. 1 John iv. 19.

2. Concerning his presence with us, we have these promises, Gen. xxvi. 24. xxviii. 15. Exod. iii. 12. Josh. i. 5. Jer. i. 8. 1 Chron. xxviii. 20. Isa. xli. 10. Matt. xxviii. 20. Rev. ii. 1.

3. Concerning his providence over us, we have these promises, Ps. xxxiv. 7. xci. 11, 12. Job. xxxvi. 7. Zech. ii. 8.

2d. From Christ we have promises,—1. Of the person of Christ. 2. Of the benefits that flow from Christ.

1. Of the person of Christ, in Genesis iii. 15. where was the first promise, and the foundation of all other promises, because God intended to make good every promise in Christ.

2. Of the benefits that flow from Christ:

1. Concerning redemption, we have these promises, Tit. ii. 14. Eph. i. 7. Gal. iii. 13. Heb. ix. 12.

2. Concerning vocation, we have these promises, Acts ii. 39. Rom. viii. 30.

3. Concerning justification, we have these promises, Isaiah liii. 11. Acts xiii. 39. Rom. viii. 33.

4. Concerning reconciliation, we have these promises, 2 Cor. v. 18, 19. Eph. ii. 14, 16. Col. i. 21, 22.

5. Concerning adoption, we have these promises, Gal. iii. 26. John i. 12. Rom. ix. 26. Gal. iv. 4, 5, 7.

3d. From the Spirit of Christ we have promises,—1. Of the Spirit himself. 2. Of the operation of the Spirit.

1. Of the Spirit himself, in Joel ii. 28, 29. Acts ii. 17, 18. John xiv. 16, 17. Eph. i. 13. Gal. iii. 14.

2. Of the operation of the Spirit, and that—1. In general, as sanctification. 2. In special, as spiritual graces, and spiritual duties.

2. Concerning sanctification, we have these promises, Micah vii. 19. Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. Heb. viii. 10. and x. 16. 1 Thess. v. 23. 1 John i. 7. Rev. i. 5.

Concerning graces and duties, we shall handle them anon.

2. For the exercise of faith concerning the promises, that we may live by them, go we to meditation and prayer.

1. For meditation, consider these things:

1. That faith (considering the privileges of God's children,) admires and adores: *Oh, how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee, before the sons of men.*

2. That faith, on this account, rests upon God, and Christ, and the Spirit of Christ, to receive whatsoever may be good and profitable to the soul: *The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.* What can they want, who have God for their Father, Christ for their Saviour, the Spirit for their sanctifier?

3. That faith hereupon sets an high price upon Christ, upon

God in Christ, upon the Spirit of Christ. These promises are more worth than kingdoms, empires, the whole world. Pleasures, profits, honours, all are vain and empty, and nothing is to be rested on, but Jesus Christ; yea, there is a full content in Jesus Christ.

4. Faith in these promises doth greatly enlarge the heart towards God, and stirreth up to earnest study of holiness; if a Christian be much in the meditation of God's singular goodness in Christ, it will even constrain him to yield up himself wholly to God, in all manner of godly conversation.

5. Faith ever runs to these promises in all straits, and here it finds comfort. Where can it take up a surer and safer refuge than with God and Christ, and the Spirit of Christ? Indeed, God it dares not look at, but in Christ; and the Spirit proceeds not but from Christ: to Christ therefore it runs immediately; it is Christ, *who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.* 'Come,' saith faith, 'let us go to Christ, and if he receive us not presently, let us stay a little; he is full of bowels and tenderness towards poor sinners; he keeps open house for all comers; he invites all, entertains all, old sinners, young sinners, great sinners, less sinners; his promise is sure too: *Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.*

2. For prayer, observe this method:

1. Confess and acknowledge God's mercies both in his promises and performances.

2. Pray for this increase of faith, and for a farther and farther sight of this belief; 'Give me, gracious Father, to believe as thou hast promised; create in me the hand of faith, and make it stronger and stronger, that I may effectually receive what in mercy thou reachest forth; and then give me the spirit of revelation, that I may discern truly what thou hast given me, *that my lips may sing of thy praise all the day long.*'

3. Praise God for his mercies, and quietly rest in the promises: 'O Lord, thou hast freely loved, and redeemed, and sanctified, my soul; O how should I praise thee? Lord, thou hast given Christ for my wisdom and sanctification, as well as for righteousness and redemption: Lord, thou hast appointed Christ to be the beginner and finisher of my holiness, and surely he will not leave the work imperfect, whereunto he is ordained of the Father. Were the progress of this building committed to my care and oversight, there might be cause of fear; but since thou hast laid all upon Christ, my only and all-sufficient Redeemer, Lord, increase my faith, that I may hold him fast and be safe, and so at last may sing hallelujahs to thee in heaven for ever and ever.

SECT. VI.

Of the Manner of this Life of Faith in spiritual Graces.

The operation of the Spirit appears in spiritual graces, and spiritual duties.

1. The kinds of graces are these; faith, hope, joy, love, fear, obedience, repentance, humility, meekness, patience, zeal, and perseverance: concerning which the Lord hath made gracious promises, to give them, and to reward them.

The first grace is faith; and we find promises, 1. Of it, Eph. ii. 8. Job. vi. 37. Observe here these promises of assurance, the highest measure of faith, Psal. l. 23. Ezek. xxxiv. 30. Isa. lx. 16. Psal. xcvii. 11.—2. To it, 2 Chron. xi. 20. Prov. xxix. 25. Isa. xxvi. 3. Acts x. 43. Rom. xviii. 4. Acts xiii. 39. John i. 12. vii. 38. iii. 16, 36, v. 24. and vi. 47.

The second is hope; and we find promises, 1. Of it, Psal. lxv. 4. Prov. xiv. 32. Job. xiii. 15.—2. To it, Psal. xl. 4. Rom. iv. 18, 22. and viii. 24.

The third is joy; and we find promises, 1. Of it, Psal. xxxvi. 8, 9. lxiv. 10. lxviii. 3. xcvii. 11. cxviii. 15. Isa. xii. 2, 3. xxxv. throughout, lvi. 7. lxvi. 13, 14. John xvi. 22. Rom. xiv. 17.—2. To it, Psal. lxxxix. 15, 16.

The fourth is love; especially of God, and we may find promises, 1. Of it, Cant. i. 4. Deut. xxx. 6.—2. To it, Psal. xci. 14. cxlv. 20. Prov. viii. 21. Deut. vii. 9. 1 Cor. viii. 3. ii. 9, 10. James i. 12. ii. 5.

The fifth is fear; and we find promises, 1. of it, Jer. xxxii. 39, 40. Hos. iii. v.—2. To it, Psal. ciii. 11. xxxi. 19. cxlvii. 11. Mal. iii. 16, 17.

The sixth is obedience; and we find promises, 1. Of it, Ezek. xi. 19, 20. xxxvi. 26, 27.—2. To it, Deut. xxviii. 1, 2, to 14.

The seventh is repentance; and we find promises, 1. Of it, Acts v. 30, 31. Ezek. xi. 19. xx. 43. xxxvi. 31.—2. To it, Mal. iii. 7. Isa. lv. 7. 2 Chron. vii. 14. Isa. i. 16, 17, 18. Job iii. 27, 28. Jer. iv. 14.

The eighth is humility; and we find some promises, 1. Of it, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. Gal. v. 22.—2. To it, Prov. xv. 33. xxii. 4. James iv. 6. 1 Peter v. 5. Isa. lvii. 15. Matt. v. 3.

The ninth is meekness; and we find promises, 1. Of it, Isa. xi. 6, 7, 8. Gal. v. 22, 23.—2. To it, Psal. xxxvii. 11. cxlvii. 6. Isa. xxix. 9. Psal. xxv. 9. Zeph. ii 3. Matt. v. 5. and xi. 29. Psal. cxlix. 4.

The tenth is patience; and we find promises, 1. Of it, James i. 5.—2. To it, Heb. x. 36. James v. 11.

The eleventh is zeal; and we find some promises, 1. Of it, Jer. xx. 9. 2 Cor. vii. 11.—2. To it, Numb. xxv. 12, 13. Rev. iii. 19, 20.

The twelfth is perseverance; and we find some promises, 1. Of it, Psal. lxxxix. 28. Prov. xii. 3. Isa. xlvi. 4.—2. To it, Matt. x. 22. Rev. ii. 26.

The degrees of graces follow; and we find some promises, 1. Thereof, Isa. xliv. 3, 4. Mal. iv. 2. Psal. lxxxiv. 7. Prov. iv. 18.—2. Thereto, Rom. xiii. 11. 2 Pet. 1, 8.

2. For the exercise of faith concerning these promises, that we may live by them, go we to meditation and prayer.

1. For meditation, consider.

1. That of ourselves we have no ability to attain any of these graces: every one can say, I purpose well; but the question is, whether they build not on their own strength? Many a man (especially in time of his sickness, danger, disgrace) will make fair promises of amendment; but when the rod is removed, all is forgotten: what may be the reason? He stands on his own feet, he presumes to go of himself, and then no marvel if he falls. If we will have any of these graces, then deny we ourselves: *I will keep thy statutes*, said David: but immediately he cries, *O forsake me not utterly!* Purposes thus grounded, bring forth holy performances; but of ourselves we can expect nothing.

2. That God's Spirit will infuse these graces, and the increase of these graces, into them that believe: many would fain have hope and joy, but they exercise not their faith to believe God and his promises: I knew a man in Christ, off and on, unstayed, dismayed at his manifold slips, strong corruptions, little prevailings againgst them, and, when all came to all, he could find no help till he went to a promise, and believed that God would do the whole work for him. It is good to believe that, according to his promise, God will sanctify our natures, enable us to holiness, and bestow all his graces upon us.

3. That for the degrees of these graces, it is necessary to improve them. God ever bestows the greatest measure, where he finds a care to put them forth to advantage: *Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance.* As men increase their substance by labour, and learning by diligence; so he that improves graces, shall more and more abound in them.

2. For prayer, observe this method:

1. Acknowledge your inability: 'O Lord, I have no grace by nature, I have no power to cleanse my own heart: O Lord, I have defaced thine image, but I cannot repair it; I may say with the apostle, *When I would do well, evil is present with me*, but I find no means to perfect what I desire: Oh! when shall I be set at liberty, that I might do the work of God, and run the race of his commandments; Oh! that I had faith, and hope, and joy, and love!'

2. Look we up to the power, and grace, and truth of God, and press him therewith: 'Lord, I have heard of thy power,

thou callest the things that are not, as if they were; thou canst, if thou wilt, work in me these graces, as thou didst gloriously create them in Adam: Lord, I have heard also of thy grace and truth; thou art as faithful to keep, as free to make, these precious promises. Thy grace is unsearchable, thy word purer than silver seven times refined. O make good thy promises! I press thee with thy power, grace, and truth; O replenish me with thy graces!'

3. Look we on the promises, and pray by them, or turn them into prayer. Faith hearkeneth what the Lord speaketh, and speaketh back again in fervent groans and desires to whatsoever it heareth: hence we can make no prayer in boldness, faith, or comfort, but for things promised, and in that manner as they are promised. Thus Jacob (Gen. xxxii. 9.) and David (2 Sam. vii. 27, 28, 29.) prayed by a promise, and thus should we pray by a promise, and then we may be sure we pray according to his will.

SECT. VII.

Of the Manner of his Life of Faith in spiritual Duties.

The first duty is prayer; to which are affixed these promises, Psal. v. 3. x. 17. lxv. 2. Prov. xv. 29. Psal. l. 15. xii. 17, 18, 19, 20. Zech. xiii. 8, 9. Rom. viii. 13. James v. 15.

The second is praise; to which are affixed these promises, 1 Sam. ii. 30. Psal. l. 23. and lxviii. 5, 6.

The third is preaching; to which Matt. xxviii. 20. John v. 25.

The fourth is reading the word; to which Psal. xix. 8. Prov. i. 4.

The fifth is fasting; to which James iv. 9, 10. Matt. vi. 18.

The sixth is meditation; to which Psal. i. 2. Prov. xiv. 22. Phil. iv. 8, 9.

The seventh is examination; to which 1 Cor. xi. 31. Gal. vi. 4.

The eighth is sanctification of the Lord's day; to which Isa. lviii. 13, 14. lvi. 2. Jer. xvii. 26.

The ninth is reproof; to which Prov. xxiv. 25. xxviii. 23.

The tenth is almsgiving; to which Psal. xli. 1, 2, 3. Luke xiv. 13, 14.

The eleventh is waiting on God; to which Isa. xl. 31. lxiv. 4. xlix. 23.

2. For the exercise of faith concerning these promises, that we may live by them, go we to meditation and prayer.

For meditation, consider:—

1. That God deals graciously with his people. He might, out of his absolute sovereignty, command only, and we were bound to obey in every of these duties; but he is pleased, the better to quicken us to obedience, to annex these gracious promises.

2. That as he is gracious to us; so we should be cheerful in

our duties to him: this cheerfulness of service is the very best fruit of faith; by faith *Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof, an offering to the Lord.* By faith David *went with the multitude unto the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise.* It is the voice of faith,—I will sing and give praise with the best member I have.

2. For prayer, observe this method:

1. Acknowledge the goodness and free-grace of God in these promises: 'O Lord, why shouldst thou allure me to that which I am every way bound to? If I had none of these promises, I have already in hand a world of mercies, which infinitely bind me to duty; and wilt thou yet add this and that promise, to this and that duty? O the miracle of mercies! O the goodness of God!'

2. Bewail your own dulness and sloth to the duty: 'And yet, O Lord, how dull, and remiss, and slight, am I in the practice of this or that duty? Thou hast said, *Cursed is the man that doth the work of the Lord negligently:* Oh! then what is my portion? No marvel if I feel no power, no sweet, in the ordinances, whilst I deal partially, hear perfunctorily, pray coldly, labour not to feed on the promise. O Lord, thou lovest a cheerful giver; but my services are maimed, corrupt, dead, superficial, and very uncheerful.'

3. Importune the Lord to quicken your dead hearts to the duty; so prays David, *Teach me to do thy will; thy Spirit is good, lead me in the land of uprightness:* so prays the church, "Draw me, and we will run after thee;" and so let us pray, 'Give me a cheerful heart in thy service, enliven my heart by thy blessed Spirit, give me to do what thou requirest, incline my heart to thy statutes.'

4. Implore the assistance of God's Spirit to every good duty; beg acceptance of your persons and performances in the Lord Jesus Christ; press him with his promises, to set on duties, and to reward duties; and whatever duty you do, press him with that especial promise belonging unto it. Thus if we meditate and pray, and pray and meditate, we may live by faith in reference to spiritual duties.

SECT. VIII.

Of the Manner of the Life of Faith in Things eternal.

1. Concerning damnation, or eternal confusion, we have these promises against it, Isa. xlv. 17. Rom. viii. 1.

2. Concerning salvation, we have these promises for it, Rom. vi. 23. 1 Thess. iv. 17. God hath promised us a kingdom, Matt. xxv. 34. *an heavenly kingdom,* Matt. vii. 21. *an eternal king-*

dom, 2 Pet. i. 11. *a crown of life*, James i. 12. *a crown of righteousness*, 2 Tim. iv. 8. *an immarcessible crown of glory*. 1 Pet. v. 4.

4. For the exercise of faith concerning these promises, that we may live by them, go we to meditation and prayer.

1. For meditation, consider,

1. That faith in the precious promises of eternal life, quiets and cheers the heart in the midst of discouragements.

2. That fulness of glory is reserved for the life to come; but the beginnings of glory, as peace, joy, sanctification, are vouchsafed here. Grace is the beginning of glory; and now as grace grows, so we enter upon the possession of our inheritance.

3. Faith earnestly desires and longs after full glory. Ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, *even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body*.

2. For prayer, observe this method:—

1. Confess we our former carelessness to enter upon this inheritance: 'O Lord, I have slighted thy promises, I have neglected the motions of thy holy Spirit, I have not carefully improved the gifts received, I have not laboured more and more to be sealed with the promised Spirit:—Ah, Lord! what a dwarf am I in holiness! By reason of my sloth, the powers of grace are so enfeebled, that I can scarce breathe or sigh in the way to heaven.'

2. Pray that the Lord would increase our faith, seal us by his Spirit, lead us in the way of peace, cause us to grow up in holiness, make us wise to prize and value, to taste and relish, the very joys of heaven: and above all, that he would assure our consciences of our right and title thereto.

3. Praise God for his promises of eternal life: 'O Lord, thou hast looked on my base estate, and visited me with mercy from on high; of a stranger and a foreigner, thou hast made me a free denizen of the new Jerusalem: now I see, I read it in thy precious promises, that my name is registered in heaven; an eternal weight of glory is reserved for me; heaven is my home, my hope, my inheritance: Oh! where shall my heart be, but where my treasure is!—Oh! the incomprehensible love and favour of my dear Lord! What a mercy is this! what promises are these! —*My soul rejoiceth in thee my God, my spirit shall bless thy name for ever and ever.*

SECT. IX.

Of the Manner of this Life of Faith in regard of Others.

We have done with the promises that concern ourselves: now follow such special promises as we find in holy writ concerning

others; and they have reference, either to our own family, to godly society farther enlarged, or to the church of Christ.

1st. The members of our family are, husband and wife, parent and child, master and servant.

1. For the husband and wife; they have promises from the Lord, Ps. cxxxviii. Prov. xxxi. 28. and xi. 16. Job v. 25.

2. For parent and child; God hath made a gracious covenant with them, Gen. xvii. 7, 9. Acts ii. 39. Jer. xxxii. 39. Prov. xx. 7. Good parents, though poor, leave their children a good patrimony, for they have laid up many prayers for them in heaven, and they leave God's favour for their possession, and his promises for a sure inheritance, Psal. xxxvii. 25, 26. Prov. xi. 21. Psal. cxii. 2. and xxv. 13. and xxxvii. 29. Prov. xiii. 22. Isa. xliv. 3, 4. and liv. 13.—And children obeying their parents have these promises, Exod. xx. 12. Eph. vi. 2. Jer. xxxv. 18, 19. Prov. i. 8, 9. and vi. 20.

3. For master and servant: they have sweet promises, Prov. iii. 33. Job viii. 16. Prov. xiv. 11.—especially the servant that is truly obedient, Col. iii. 23, 24. 1 Pet. ii. 19.

Here consider magistrates, Deut. xvii. 19, 20. Ps. cxxxii. 18. —and ministers, Psal. cv. 15. Rev. ii. 1. Isa. xlix. 4.

2d. Godly society, out of our own families, hath precious promises, as Prov. xiii. 20. Mal. iii. 16, 17. Matt. xviii. 20.

3d. The church of Christ, whether particular, (as public assemblies,) hath blessed promises, Isa. xxxiii. 20, 21. lix. 21. Matt. xviii. 20. 1 Cor. v. 4. Rev. ii. 1. Psal. xxvi. 8. and cxxxiii. 3. Mic. iv. 4, 11, 12.—or whether general and universal, it hath glorious promises, as Matt. xvi. 8. Isa. xxvii. 3. Psal. cxxv. 2. Zech. ix. 16. Here come in all the promises: first, of calling the Jews, as Isa. lix. 20. Rom. xi. 23, 26. Hos. xiii. 14. and xiv. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.; secondly, of bringing in the Gentiles, as Isa. xlix. 22, 23. Rev. xxi. 24. John x. 16. Isa. lx. 3, 5, 8. Acts x. 14. Eph. ii. 12, 19.; thirdly, of the destruction of Antichrist, as 2 Thess. ii. 8. Rev. xvii. 16. and xviii. 21. where each word hath almost a gradation, in that *an angel, a mighty angel, taketh a stone, a great stone, even a millstone,* which he letteth not barely fall, but *casteth into the sea,* whence nothing ordinarily is recovered, much less a millstone, thrust from such a hand, and with such force.

Now for the exercising of faith concerning these promises, that we may live by them, go we to meditation and prayer.

For meditation, consider,

1. That we have had the performance of many of these promises; and this may persuade us that the residue (especially of the church's flourishing, and of Antichrist's downfall) is as sure as that part already accomplished; experience should strengthen faith, and breed an assured hope in God's people, of the Lord's most glorious appearing.

2. That the time is now for the church's restoring, and for bringing in more kingdoms from Antichrist to Christ. What else mean all the shakings in all the kingdoms of the world? Therefore study we this time of God, and, in our places and callings, work with providence, now we have a season, to help up the church, God's holy mountain.

For prayer, observe this method:

1. Confess our former neglect in our several relations: 'O Lord, I have not done my duty in my own family, among Christians, in the churches of Christ; I have not performed my vows, served my generation, helped onward the building of Zion. And now, Lord, what shall I say, but confess it to thy glory, and my own shame?'

2. Pray for a blessing on others, as on our ownselves; forget not our relations to others in our best prayers; be importunate with God, more especially for Zion.—*O look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities; let thine eyes see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; let not one of the stakes thereof be removed, nor any of the cords be broken.*

3. Press we the Lord with all his precious promises, either to our families, or Christian societies, or the churches of Christ. We have a promise, that *the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of mount Zion, and upon the assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night, for upon all the glory shall be a defence:* 'Now, Lord, make good thy word.'

Conclude with, I believe, that whatsoever God hath said in any of these respects, he will fulfil it in his own time: *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one jot, one tittle, of God's word shall fail.* It may be for the present things seem contrary, yet God hath said it, and that is enough for me: if I can but really acknowledge and believe that God is able to do it, he will then speak from heaven, as he did once on earth,—*According to your faith be it unto you.*

OF FAMILY DUTIES.

SECT. I.

Of the Nature of Family Duties.

HITHERTO of the duties which concern every man, in his own particular; next to them succeed family duties, which ought to be jointly or respectively observed by the families and houses of the people of God. This is implied by that threat, *Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families*

that call not upon thy name; and by that example of Joshua, *But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord;* and by that promise of God, *At the same time, saith the Lord, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people.*

SECT. II.

Of the Preparatives to Family Duties.

Now that we may comfortably carry on these family duties, observe we—

1. Our entrance into them.
2. Our proceedings in them.

For entrance, we must lay a good foundation in those that belong to this family:

1st. In the governor, whose duty it is,

1. To endeavour in a special manner for knowledge in God's word, and for holiness of conversation; this would tend much to the preservation of his authority, who otherwise will be slighted and disregarded.

2. To marry in the Lord, and then to live chastely in wedlock, that there may be an holy seed.

3. To beware whom he admits to dwell with him. See David's resolution herein, *Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way shall serve me; he that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house; he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.*

2d. In the governed, whose duty it is both to join together in the performance of family duties with their governor, and to submit to his government:—*My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother; for they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.*

SECT. III.

Of the Duties of Governors in general.

In the proceedings of these family duties, we are to consider the duties, 1. Of the governors; 2. Of the governed.

1. The governors, if (as it is in marriage) there be more than one, as first, the chief governor, to wit, the husband; secondly, the helper, to wit, the wife: both these owe duties to their families, and duties to one another.

The duties they owe to their families, are,—In general, to the whole: in particular, according to their several relations.

That which in general they owe to the whole family, is both to their bodies and souls.

1. To their bodies; concerning which, saith the apostle, *He that provideth not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.*

2. To their souls; concerning which, some duties they are to perform to the family, and some to require of the family.

1st. The duties they must perform to them, are—

1. To provide that they may live under the public ministry; for otherwise how should they be brought into the sheepfold of Christ, if they hear not the voice of the Chief Shepherd speaking unto them by those whom he hath sent.

2. To oversee the ways of their families, that they serve God; and as in all other duties, so especially in sanctifying the Sabbath: to this the very words in the fourth commandment bind all masters of families; *Remember thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid:*—where the Lord speaks by name to the governors, as if he would make them overseers of this work of sanctifying of his Sabbaths.

3. To offer prayers and praises to the Lord, morning and evening. This was David's practice; *Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud, and he shall hear my voice.*

4. To instruct their families privately in matters of religion, that they may not only profess, but feel the power of religion. This duty implies,—

1. A familiar catechizing of them in the principles of religion. Thus were parents commanded of old, *Thou shalt teach these words diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.*

2. A daily reading of scriptures in their hearing, directing them to mark and to make use of them: so Timothy was trained up by his parents, and that from his childhood.

3. A careful endeavouring that they profit by the public ministry: to this end, they must prepare them to hear the word, by considering God's ordinances, promises, and their own necessities. 2. They must remind them to look into the word for Christ, and for communion with Christ. 3. They must examine them after the ordinance, what they have learned, and what use they can make of it.

2d. The duties they are to require of the family, are both carefully to frequent the public ministry, and diligently to be conversant in the private worship of God, and constantly to practice all holy and christian duties; and they are to require these things, not only by telling them, calling on them, catechizing them, admonishing them; but if they be negligent, by correcting them.

Now this correction must be ministered in wisdom and patience.

1. In wisdon , whose property it is to find out the right party that committed the fault, to consider of what sort the fault is, to weigh circumstances of age, discretion, and occasions; and to look to the mind of the doer, whether negligence or mere simplicity brought him to it.

2. In patience, whose property it is to make the fault manifest to the offender, that his conscience may be touched therewith; to hear what the offender can say in his own defence, and accordingly to allow or disallow; to avoid bitterness, which sooner will harden the heart, than reform the manners of the offender. These rules being observed, and the heart lifted up in prayer to God for direction and blessing, this correction is necessary, as is evident in Gen. xxx. 2. Prov. xiii. 24. xix. 18.

These are the duties that governors owe to families in respect of their souls; to correct them, catechize them, admonish them, call on them, read to them, pray for them.

SECT. IV.

Of the Duties of Parents to their Children.

The duties in particular which governors owe to the family, according to their relations, are, as parents to their children, or as masters to their servants.

1st. The duties of parents to the bodies of their children, are in many particulars, but may be all comprised under this one head, a provident care for their temporal good.

1. The first age of a child is his infancy, and the first part of his infancy, is while it remaineth in the mother's womb: here the duty lies principally upon the mother, to have a special care of it, that it may be safely brought forth.

The next degree of a child's infancy, is while it is in the swadling-band, and remains a sucking child: in this also the care more especially lies on the mother, whose duty it is to take all pains she possibly may, for the education of her child.

2. The second age of a child is its youth, from the time it begins to be of any discretion, till it be fit to be placed forth: now the duty of parents at this time is, 1. To nourish, and 2. To nurture their children.

Under nourishment, are comprised food, apparel, means for recovery of health when they are sick; in which if parents provide not for their children, *they are worse than infidels:* and under nurture are comprised good manners, a good calling, frequent admonition, reprehension, correction, the last remedy

which may do good when nothing else can, Prov. xix. 18. xxiii 13, 14. xxix. 17.

2d. The duty of parents to the souls of their children extends itself also to all times; as, 1. To their infancy, 2. To their youth, 3. To the time of the parents' departure out of this world.

1. The first age of a child is his infancy, and the first part of its infancy is while it remaineth in the mother's womb. Now the duty of parents at that time are these: 1. That they pray for their children: thus did Rebekah, while the children were quick in her womb. Those parents that neglect this duty to their children, consider not rightly that they are conceived in sin.

2. That they make sure, so much as in them lies, that their children be born under the promise, or under the covenant, in respect of the spiritual part of it: how? By making sure that they be under the promise or covenant themselves. If God in Christ be their God, they may have a comfortable hope that God will be the God of their seed, according to the promise, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed.*

The next degree of a child's infancy is, when it is born; and the duty of parents then is, to give up their children unto God, casting them into the hands of his providence, into the arms of his mercy, begging for them a gracious acceptation with God; and to tender them to the ordinance, the sacrament of baptism, to get the seal of the covenant set upon them.

2. The second age of a child is its youth: now the duty of parents to their children at this time is, to train them up in true piety, to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. To this end,

1. When children begin to read, let them read the holy Scriptures: so was Timothy trained up from a child.

2. Let children be catechized constantly from day to day; only with this caveat, that parents deal with their children as skilful nurses and mothers do in feeding their children, *i. e.* not to give them too much at once; overmuch dulls a child's understanding, and breeds wearisomeness to it. It is most suitable to give them *precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, and there a little:* thus shall they learn with ease and delight, and in time a great measure of knowledge will be gained thereby.

3. Let parents declare to their children, the admirable works that God in former times hath done for his church, especially such works as he hath done in their time. Outward sensible things do best work upon children, and therefore this direction was given under the law, Josh. iv. 6, 21.

4. Let parents be to their children a good pattern, leading them to Christ by their examples: this will take place with children, more than all precepts.

5. Let parents reprove and correct their children for sin; and that the Lord may sanctify this correction unto them, consider this, O ye parents! Do you observe such and such sins in your children? Enter into your own hearts, examine yourselves, whether they come not from you: consider how justly the hand of God may be upon you; and when you are angry with your children, have an holy anger with your ownselves, and use this or the like meditation with your own souls: Lord, shall I thus punish my own sin in my child? How then mayest thou be displeased with me for the too carnal conception of my child: it may be, I then lay in some sin, or I asked it not of thee by prayer: be merciful to me, O Lord, and in thy good time shew thou pity on me and my child!

6. As children grow in years, and in the knowledge of Christ, and of justification by Christ, let parents train them up in the exercise of all duties; as prayer, meditation, self-examination, watchfulness, and all means, public and private: if this be done, the world to come may reap the benefit of their education. Such children as you bring up, such parents will they be (when you are gone) to their children.

3d. The last time to which the duty of parents extends itself, is the time of their departure out of the world; and then they owe to their children good direction, and faithful prayer.

1. For direction: when parents observe their time to draw near, it is their duty then especially to commend some wise and wholesome precepts unto their children, the better to direct them in their Christian course. The words of a dying parent are especially regarded, and make a deeper impression.

2. For prayer: then is the most proper time for parents to pray for, and bless all their children. As they commend their own souls unto God's hands, so let them commend their children unto God's grace. God's providence and promises are the best inheritance in the world; and if parents, in their prayers, leave these to their children, they can never want any thing that is good. Oh! the faithful prayers of parents for their children (especially when they are leaving their children and going to God) must needs, in, for, and through Christ, prevail mightily with God.

SECT. V.

Of the Duties of Masters to Servants.

The duty of masters to their servants, is either to their bodies or to their souls.

1. The duty of masters to the bodies of their servants, consists in these particulars, viz. in a due provision of food for them, Prov. xxxi. 51. and xxvii. 27.—in a wise care for their clothing,

Prov. xxxi. 21.—in a well-ordering of their labour, so as they may be able to undergo it: in their ease, rest, and intermission from labour at seasonable times: in paying them sufficient wages, Deut. xxiv. 14, 15.—in a careful preserving of their health, and using means for their recovery in case of sickness, Mat. viii. 6. and that not of the servant's wages, but of the master's own charge, otherwise they *undo not the heavy burden*, but rather lay burden upon burden.

2. The duty of masters to the souls of their servants consists in these particulars, viz. In teaching them the principles of religion, and all duties of piety;—in causing them to go to the public ministry of the word and worship of God;—in taking account of their profiting by the public and private means of edification;—in praying for them, and, as they observe any grace wrought in them, in praising God for it, and praying for the increase of it.

SECT. VI.

Of the Duties of the Husband and Wife.

The duties which the chief governor and his helper owe to one another, are either common and mutual, or peculiar to each.

1. The common mutual duties betwixt man and wife, are matrimonial unity, and matrimonial chastity; loving affection of one another: and provident care of one for another.

The former duties presupposed; there ought to be—

1. A loving and tender-hearted pouring out of their hearts, with much affectionate dearness, into each other's bosom. This mutual melting-heartedness, being preserved fresh and fruitful, will infinitely sweeten and beautify the marriage state.—Now for the preservation of this love, let them consider,

1. The compassionate and melting compellations which Christ and his spouse exchange in the Canticles: *My fair one, my love, my dove, my undefiled, my well-beloved, the chief of ten thousand.* Such a fervent and chaste love as this, all married couples should imitate.

2. The command of God; *Husbands, love your wives*, Eph. v. 25. and, *Wives* (or young women) *love your husbands*, Tit. ii. 4. Methinks this charge, oft remembered, should ever beat back all heart-rising and bitterness, all wicked wishes that they had never met together. When the knot is tied, every man should think his wife the fittest for him, and every wife should think her husband the fittest for her, of any other in the world.

2d. A provident care of one for another; which extends to the body: *No man hateth his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it:* but especially to the soul; in praying together, for, and with one another; in taking notice of the beginning and least

measure of grace, and approving the same; in conferring about such things as concern the same, mutually propounding questions, and giving answers, one to another; in maintaining holy and religious exercises in the family, and betwixt their ownselves, in stirring up one another to hear the word, to receive the sacraments, and to perform all the parts of God's public worship. In case the one prove unconverted, let the other wait and pray, and expect God's good time: or in case the one be a *babe in Christ*, let the other deal lovingly, meekly, and let our Lord Jesus, in his tender-heartedness to spiritual younglings, teach us mercy this way, who is said to *gather the lambs with his arms, and to carry them in his bosom, and gently to lead those that are with young.*

2. The peculiar duties of each are:—

1. Of the husband, whose duty it is—1. that he dearly love his wife;—2. that he wisely maintain and manage his authority over her.

1. No question the wife is to love her husband, and a brother to love his brother, and a friend to love his friend, but more especially is the husband to love his wife. To this purpose she is called, *the wife of his bosom*, to shew that she ought to be as his heart in his bosom. He must love her at all times, he must love her in all things; love must season and sweeten his speech, carriage, actions, towards her; love must shew itself in his commands, reproofs, admonitions, instructions, authority, familiarity with her: the rise of which love must not be from her beauty or nobility, but especially because she is his sister in the Christian religion, and an inheritor with him of the kingdom of heaven; because of her graces and virtues, because she bears him children, the heirs of his name and substance, and because of the union and conjunction of marriage. Love, growing on beauty, riches, lust, or any other slight grounds, soon vanisheth; but if grounded on these considerations, and especially on this union of marriage, it is lasting and true: the want hereof is the fountain of strife, quarrelling, and debate, which converts the paradise of marriage into an hell.

For the manner of this love, the apostle gives it thus, *Husbands, love your own wives, even as Christ also loved the church.* Now the love of Christ to his church, is commended to us in these particulars:—

1. His love was every way free: so should husbands love their wives, though there be nothing in wives to move them, but merely because they are their wives.

2. Christ began it to the church, before the church could love him; so should husbands begin to love their own wives. I know some wives prevent their husbands therein, but the greater is their glory. This pattern of Christ should rather stir up their husbands to go before them.

3. The truth of Christ's love was manifested by the fruits thereof to his church; *he gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, and present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle:* so must husbands love their wives in truth, by guiding them in the way of life; for this is the true character of a sincere love.

4. Christ's love is an holy, pure, and chaste love; as he himself is, so is his love: such must be the love of husbands, an holy, pure, and chaste love. Away with all intemperate, excessive, or any ways exorbitant, pollutions of the marriage bed; from which, if the fear of God, imitation of Christ, love of purity, awfulness of God's all-seeing eye, cannot draw; yet that horror, lest God should punish such a couple with no children, or misshapen children, or with idiots, or wicked children, or with some other heavy cross, one would think should be able to affright them.

5. Christ *having loved his own, loved them unto the end.* Such must be the love of husbands, a firm love, an inviolable love: the ground of it must be God's ordinance, and the support of it must be an inviolable resolution, that no provocation shall ever change it. Husbands must pass by all infirmities, endeavouring in love to redress them, if possibly they can, or, if not, to bear with them.

The second duty of a husband, is, wisely to maintain and manage his authority: now the management of it consists in two things:—

1. That he tenderly respect her.
2. That he carefully provide for her.

1st. He must tenderly respect her, as his wife, companion, yoke-fellow, as his delight, and the desire of his eyes, and never be bitter against her. This bitterness ordinarily turneth the edge of his authority; if therefore any matter of unkindness arise, as sometimes certainly it will, then must he carefully, with all gentleness and patience, quiet all; and never suffer himself nor his wife to sleep in displeasure. *Let not the sun go down upon your wrath:* or if he shall have occasion to reprove her, he must keep his words until a convenient time, not in presence of others, and then in the spirit of meekness and love. Surely, if she be not corrected by a word of wisdom, she will never amend by threats or rigorous carriage; and if she once begin to lose her shamefacedness in the presence of her husband, it is likely there will be often quarrels betwixt them, and the house will be full of disquietness: it is best therefore to deal wisely with her, to admonish her often, to reprehend her seldom, never to lay violent hands on her; if she be dutiful, to cherish her, that she may so continue; if wayward, mildly to suffer her, that she wax not worse.

2d. He must carefully provide for her; to this purpose he is

called her head, as Christ is head of the church. The head, you know, is the fountain of motion, quickening, life, to the body; so should the husband be as the well-spring of liveliness, light-someness, light-heartedness, to his wife: she hath forsook all for him, and therefore she should receive from him a continual influence of cheerful walking, and comfortable enjoying herself.

2. The duties proper to the wife, are these:—

1. That she be in submission to her husband.

2. That she be an helper to him all her days.

1st. *Wives must be in subjection to their own husbands.* Sarah obeyed Abraham, and called him lord. But here is a case of conscience:

1. What if her husband be *a son of Belial,* and an enemy to Christ, must she then yield subjection? Yes, because in his office her husband is as in Christ's stead. The church is compared to a lily among thorns, she remains lily-like, white, soft, pleasant and amiable, though she be joined with thorns, which are prickly and sharp: so a wife must be meek, mild, gentle, obedient, though she be matched with a crooked, perverse, and wicked husband: she must, in this case, remove her eyes from the disposition of her husband's person to the condition of his place, and by virtue thereof, seeing he beareth Christ's image, be subject unto him as unto Christ.

2. What if her husband command things contrary to Christ, must she therein be subject? No, *submit as unto the Lord:* if she submits to things contrary to Christ, she submits not as to the Lord. Conscientious wives must remember they have an husband in heaven, as well as on earth, betwixt whom there is a greater difference than betwixt heaven and earth; and therefore in case they bid contrary things, they must prefer God before man, Christ before all men.

2d. Wives must be helpers to their husbands. Now this helpfulness consists in these things:

1. That she be careful to preserve his person, in sickness or health, in adversity or prosperity, in youth or old age.

2. That she learn and labour to forecast, contrive and manage household affairs; for which see a glorious pattern in Prov xxxi.

3. That she may help her husband, in erecting and establishing Christ's glorious kingdom in their house, and especially in their own hearts. This is that one necessary thing, without which their family is but Satan's seminary, and a nursery for hell. This will marvellously sweeten all reproaches cast upon them by envenomed tongues; this will sweetly seal unto them their assurance of meeting together in heaven.

Thus much of the duties of governors, we now come to the governed.

SECT. VII.

Of Duties of Children to Parents.

1. The inward duties which children owe to their parents, are love and fear: love, like sugar, sweetens fear; and fear, like salt, seasons love. There must be a loving fear, and a fearing love. Hence the fear of a child is opposed to the fear of a slave: for a child's fear being mixed with love, hath respect to the offence which a parent may take; but a slave's fear, which is ordinarily mixed with hatred, hath respect to nothing but the punishment which his master may inflict upon him. This love-like fear is so proper to children, that the awful respect which the saints bear to God, is called a filial fear. Children have received their substance from the very substance of their parents, and therefore they are to perform this duty of love and fear to them.

2. The outward duties, or the manifestation of this love and fear in children, appears,

1. In their reverence, in speech and carriage. They must give to their parents reverend and holy titles, meek and humble speeches, obeisance as becomes their age and sex. Thus Joseph and Solomon bowed, the one to his father, and the other to his mother. Contrary thereto is mocking and despising father and mother; of which said Solomon, *The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out.* A phrase that sets forth the end of a notorious malefactor, that is hanged in the air till the ravens pick out his eyes.

2. In their obedience to the commands, instructions, reproofs, and corrections, of their parents, Eph. vi. 1. Prov. i. 8, 9. The reason is, because of God, whom the father represents: children must remember, that whatsoever they do to their parents, they do it to God; when they disobey them, they disobey God; when they please them, they please God; when their parents are justly angry with them, God is angry with them, nor can they recover God's favour, though all the saints of heaven should entreat for them, till they have submitted themselves to their parents, only with this limitation, that they *submit or obey them in the Lord,* Eph. vi. 1.

3. In their recompense. This is a duty whereby children endeavour, as much as in them lies, to repay what they can for their parents' kindness, care, and cost towards them, in way of thankfulness. In sickness, they must visit them; in want, they must provide for them; in time of danger, they must endeavour their protection.

SECT. VIII.

Of the Duties of Servants to their Masters.

DUTIES of servants to their masters, are either inward, as fear; or outward, as reverence and obedience.

1. The inward duty is fear: *Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, and account them worthy of all honour.* So proper is this fear to a servant, that where it is wanting, there is a plain denial of his master's place and power. *If I be a master, where is my fear?* said God. I mean not slavish fear, as when a servant fears nothing but the revenging power of his master; but an awful fear of provoking his master, so that it makes him consider every way how he may please him; and such a fear draws him on cheerfully to perform his duty.

2. Outward duties which issue from this fear, are reverence and obedience.

1. Reverence, which is manifested in speech and carriage. Thus servants must give reverend titles to their masters, as father, lord, and master, &c. They must yield obeisance to them; as the children of the prophets, when they saw that the spirit of Elijah rested on Elisha, *came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him.*

2. Obedience, which hath respect to the commands, instructions, reproofs, and corrections, of their masters, 1 Pet. ii. 18, 19, 20. But here is a case or two of conscience.

1. How far they must obey; or what is the extent of servants' obedience to masters. The apostle answers, *Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh.* It is not sufficient that servants perform well their duties in some things; they must do it in all things; yea, in things that may be against their own liking, if their masters will have it so. Like as Peter, when Christ bid him launch out into the deep, and let down his net for a draught, he answered, *Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing; nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net.* So must servants say, when they have a peremptory command, though contrary to their own judgments, 'This or that, in all humility, I suppose; *nevertheless, at your word I will let down the net,* I will do as you please.'

2. But what if God and a master should command contrary things? In such a case, the apostle sets down an excellent limitation in these four phrases, 1. *As unto Christ.* 2. *As the servants of Christ.* 3. *Doing the will of God.* 4. *As to the Lord.* All these imply, that if masters command their servants any thing contrary to Christ, they may not yield to it: upon this ground the midwives of the Hebrew women would not kill the Hebrew children; they feared God, saith the text, and did not as the king commanded them. In this case, Joseph is commended in

not hearkening to his mistress; and the servants of Saul are commended for refusing to slay the Lord's priests at their master's command. When masters command or forbid any thing against God and Christ, they go beyond their commission, and their authority ceaseth; so that servants may say, *We ought to obey God rather than man.*

I have now run through the family, and informed you of the duties, both of governors and governed.—Christians! look within you, look about you; that man is not a good man, that is not good in all his relations. The same God that requires us to serve him as private persons, requires us to serve him in our relations; and therefore though you be never so careful of your duty in the former respect, yet you may go to hell for neglecting your duties as masters, servants, husbands, wives, parents, or children. Though if you should be good in one relation, yet if you endeavour not to be good in every relation, you shall never go to heaven; for the same God that commands you to serve him as a master, commands you to serve him as a father, as an husband. *And he that keeps the whole law, and offends in one point, is guilty of all.*

LOOKING UNTO JESUS;

OR, THE

SOUL'S EYEING OF JESUS,

AS CARRYING ON

THE GREAT WORK OF MAN'S SALVATION.

TO THE READER.

AMONGST all the duties I formerly mentioned, I omitted one, that I look upon as chief and choice of all the rest: this is the duty I call *Looking unto Jesus*, and if I must discover the occasion of my falling on it, I shall do it truly and plainly. In the Spring, 1653, I was visited with a sore sickness, and as the Lord began to restore my health, it came into my thoughts what Jesus had done for my soul, and what he was doing, and what he would do for it, till he saved it to the uttermost. In my conceptions of these things, I could find no beginning of his actings, but in that eternity before the world was made; nor could I find any end of his actings, but in that eternity after the world should be unmade; only betwixt these two extremities I apprehended various transactions of Jesus Christ, both past, and present, and to come. In the multitude of these thoughts within me, my soul exceedingly delighted itself, and that delight stirring up in me other affections, I began to consider those texts in scripture, which seemed to impose the working of my affections on so blessed an object, as a gospel-duty. Then I resolved if the Lord Jesus

would but restore my health, and prolong my life, I would endeavour to discover more of this gospel-duty, than ever yet I knew. And that my pains herein might not hinder my other necessary labours, my purpose was to fall on this subject in my ordinary preaching, wherein I might have occasion both to search into Scripture, several authors, and my own heart.

In process of time I began this work, begging of God that he would help me to finish, as he inclined me to begin, and that all might tend to his glory, and the church's good. In the progress of my labours I found a world of spiritual comfort, both in respect to the object that I handled, Jesus Christ, and in respect of the act, wherein consisted my duty to him, in looking unto Jesus.

1. For the object, it was the very subject whereon more especially I was bound to preach: *Christ in you the hope of glory,* said Paul to his Colossians; and he immediately adds, *whom we preach,* Col. i. 27, 28. and, *Unto me, who am less than the least of all the saints, is this grace given:* what grace? *that I should preach among the gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,* Eph. iii. 8. Ministers ought in duty more abundantly to preach Jesus Christ. And I may feelingly say, it is the sweetest subject that ever was preached on. Is it not *as an ointment poured forth,* whose smell is so fragrant, and whose savour is so sweet, that *therefore all the virgins love him?* Is it not comprehensive of all glory, beauty, and excellency, whether of things in heaven, or things on earth? Is it not a mystery sweet and deep? Surely volumes are written of Jesus Christ; there is line upon line, sermon upon sermon, book upon book, and yet such is the mystery, that we are all but as yet at the first side of the catechism of Jesus Christ. Solomon was but at *What is his name?* and I fear many of us know neither name nor thing. It is a worthy study to make further and further discoveries of this blessed mystery; and it were to be wished, that all the ministers of Christ would spend themselves in the spelling, and reading, and understanding of it. As some great point doth require the abilities of many scholars (and all little enough when joined together) to make a discovery thereof; such is this high point, this holy, glorious mystery, worthy of the pains of all the learned; and if they would all bring their notes together, and add all their studies together, they should find still but a little of this mystery known, in comparison of what remains unknown.

2. For the act of looking unto Jesus, as it is comprehensive of knowing, hoping, believing, loving, so also of joying. How then should I but be filled with joy unspeakable and glorious, whilst I was studying, writing, and especially acting my soul in the exercise, of this looking! If there be any duty on earth resembling the duty of the saints in heaven, I dare say, it is this. Mr. Rutherford writeth thus, "An act of living in Christ, and on Christ, in the acts of seeing, enjoying, embracing, loving

resting on him, is that noon-day divinity, and theology of beatifical vision. There is a general assembly of immediately illuminated divines round about the throne, who study, lecture, preach, praise, Christ night and day.—Oh! what rays, what dartings of intellectual fruition, beholding, enjoying, and living in him, come from that face, that God-visage of the Lord God Almighty, and of the Lamb that is in the midst of them!—And, oh, what reflections, and reachings forth of intellectual vision, embracing, loving, wondering, are returning back to him in a circle of glory!"—Now if this be the saints's duty, who are perfect in glory, do we not imitate them, and feel something of heaven in our imitation, in our looking also unto Jesus? I write what in some measure I have felt, and of which I hope to feel yet more; and therefore whoever thou art that readest, I beseech thee, come, warm thy heart at this blessed fire! Oh, come, and smell the precious ointments of Jesus Christ! Oh, come, and sit down under his shadow with great delight! Oh, that all men (especially those into whose hands this book shall come,) would presently fall upon the practice of this gospel art of looking unto Jesus! If herein they find nothing of heaven, my skill will fail me: only let them pray, that as they look to him, so virtue may go out of him, and fill their souls.

Reader, one thing more I have to say to thee: If thou wouldst know how to carry on this duty constantly, as thou dost thy morning and thy evening prayer; it were not amiss if every day, either morning or evening, thou wouldst take some part of it at one time, and some part of it at another time, at least for some space of time together. I know some, that in a constant daily course carry on in secret those two necessary duties of meditation and prayer. What the subject matter of their meditation is, I am not very certain only our experience can tell us, that be it heaven or be it hell; be it sin, or be it grace, or be it what it will; if we are in exercise of the self-same subject either constantly, or frequently, we are apt to grow remiss, or cold, or formal; and the reason is, one thing tires quickly, unless that one be all: now that is Christ, for he is all, Col. iii. 11. If then but once a day thou wouldst make this Jesus Christ thy subject to know, consider, desire, hope, believe, joy in, call upon, and conform unto, in his several respects of performing any redemption into his birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, session, intercession, and coming again, and that one of these particulars might be thy one day's exercise, and so every day thou wouldst proceed from first to last, in thus looking unto Jesus, I suppose thou wouldst never tire thyself: and why so? there is variety in this matter to be looked unto, and their is variety in the manner of looking on it. For instance: one day thou mightest act thy *knowing* of Jesus; the next day thou mightest *consider* Jesus in that respect; and the next day thou mightest *desire after* Jesus

in that respect; and the next day thou mightest *hope in* Jesus in that respect; and so on, till thou comest to the last day of the work. Now would not this variety delight? It is the observation of Mr. Lockyer, on Col. i. 16. that, "An holy soul cannot tire itself in the contemplation of Jesus:" how much less can it tire itself in looking unto Jesus, which is far more comprehensive than contemplating of Jesus! Come, try this duty, and be constant in it at least one year, and so every year during thy life; and then for thy meditations on any other subject I shall not take thee quite off, but leave the remainder of the year to thy own choice. If thou art so resolved, I shall say no more, but the Lord be with thee; and if sooner or later thou findest any benefit by this work, give God the glory, and remember him, in thy prayers, who hath taken these pains for Christ's honour, and thy soul's good.—So rests

Thy servant in Christ Jesus,

I. A.

LOOKING UNTO JESUS.

BOOK I.

Looking unto Jesus, the beginner and finisher of our faith.
HEB. XII. 2.

CHAP. I.

The Division and Opening of the Words.

THE most excellent subject to discourse or write of, is Jesus Christ. Augustin having read Cicero's works, commended them for their eloquence, but he passed this sentence upon them, "They are not sweet, because the name of Jesus is not in them." Indeed all we say is but unsavoury, if it be not seasoned with this salt. *I determined not to know any thing among you,* saith Paul, *save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.* He resolved with himself, before he preached among the Corinthians, that this should be the only point of knowledge that he would profess himself to have skill in, and that in the course of his ministry he would labour to bring them to. This he made the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, of his knowledge. *Yea, doubtless,* saith he, *and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.* In this knowledge of Christ there is an excellency above all other knowledge in the world. There is nothing more pleasing and comfortable, more animating and enlivening. Christ is the sun and centre of all divine and revealed truths: we can preach nothing else as the object of our faith, which doth not some way or other either meet in Christ, or refer to Christ. Only Christ is the whole of man's happiness; the sun to enlighten him, the physician to heal him, the wall of fire to defend him, the friend to comfort him, the pearl to enrich him, the ark to support him, the rock to sustain him under the heaviest pressures; *As an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of waters in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.* Only Christ is that ladder between earth and heaven, the Mediator betwixt God and man; a mystery which the angels of heaven desire to pry into. Here is a blessed subject indeed: who would not be glad to be acquainted with it? *This is life eternal, to know God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.* Come then! let us look on this Sun of righteousness; we cannot

receive harm, but good, by such a look. Indeed, by looking long on the natural sun we may have our eyes dazzled, and our faces blackened; but by looking unto Jesus, we shall have our eyes clearer, and our faces fairer. If the light of the eye rejoice the heart, how much more when we have such a blessed object to look upon! As Christ is more excellent than all the world, so this sight transcends all other sights. Looking unto Jesus, is the epitome of a Christian's happiness, the quintessence of evangelical duties.

In the text we have the act and object. The act in the original is very emphatical, but the English doth not fully express it; it signifies a drawing of the eye from one object to another: there are two expressions; the one signifies a turning of the eye from all other objects; the other, a fast fixing of the eye upon such an object, and only upon such. So is it both a looking off, and a looking on. On what? That is the object, a looking unto Jesus: a title that denotes his mercy, as Christ denotes his office. My meaning is not to insist on this name, in contradiction to any other names of Christ. He is often called Christ, and Lord, and Mediator, and Son of God, and Emmanuel: but Jesus is all these; Jesus is Christ, as he is the Anointed of God; and Jesus is Lord, as he hath dominion over all the world; and Jesus is mediator, as he is the reconciler of God and man; and Jesus is the Son of God, as he was eternally begotten before all worlds; and Jesus is Emmanuel, as he was incarnate, and so God with us. Only because Jesus signifies Saviour, and this name was given him upon that very account; *for he shall save his people from their sins:* I shall make this my design to look at Jesus more especially, as carrying on the great work of our salvation from first to last. This indeed is the glad tidings, the gospel, the gospel privilege, and our gospel duty—looking unto Jesus.

CHAP. II.

The Duty of looking off all other Things, confirmed and cleared.

But first we must look off all other things. We must take off our minds from every thing, which might divert us in our Christian race from looking unto Jesus.

But what things are they we must look off in this respect? I answer; 1. Good things. 2. Evil things.

1. Good things. The apostle tells us of *a cloud of witnesses,* in the former verse, which no question in their season we are to look unto. But when this second object comes in sight, he scatters the cloud quite, and sets up Jesus himself: now the apostle willeth us to turn our eyes from them, and to turn hither to Jesus Christ; as if he had said, If you will indeed see

a sight once for all, look to him. The saints, though they be guides to us, yet are they but followers to him; he is the leader of them, and of us all; look on him. There is a time, when James may say, *Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example;* but when Jesus comes forth, that saith, *I have given you an example,* an example above all examples, then be silent all flesh before the Lord. Let all saints and seraphim then cover their faces with their wings, that we may look on Jesus, and let all other sights go.

2. Evil things. We must look off all that is in the world; and that the apostle compriseth under these three heads, *the lusts of the eyes, the lusts of the flesh, the pride of life;* or, pleasures, profits, and honours.

1. We must look off this world in respect of its sinful pleasures. Jude tells us, *such as are sensual have not the Spirit.* We cannot fixedly look on pleasures, and look on Jesus, at once.

2. We must look off this world in respect of its sinful profits. A look on this keeps off our looking unto Jesus. *Whosoever loveth the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* Just so much as the world prevails in us, so much is God's love abated both in us and towards us. *Ye adulterers and adulteresses,* saith St. James, *know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?* When we have enough of God and Christ, and yet desire to make up our happiness in the creature, this is plain spiritual whoredom.

3. We must look off the world in respect of its honours. What is this desire to be well thought of, or well spoken of? As if a man should run up and down after a feather flying in the air. It is a question whether ever he get it; but if he do, it is but a feather: such is honour; it is hard to obtain it, but, if obtained, it is but the breath of a few men's mouths; but what is worst of all, it hinders our sight of Christ. *Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.* Worldly honour keeps many back from Christ.

But why must we look off every thing that diverts our looking unto Jesus?

1. Because we cannot look fixedly on Christ, and such things, at once. The eye cannot look upwards and downwards at once; we cannot seriously mind heaven and earth in one thought. *No man can serve two masters;* especially such as jar, and have contrary employments, as Christ and Mammon have.

2. Because whilst we look on these things, we cannot see the beauty that is in Christ. Our wishing looks on other things, makes Christ but mean and contemptible in our eyes.

3. Because all other things, in comparison of Christ, are not worthy a look; they are but poor, low, mean, base things, in comparison of Christ: *I count all things but loss,* saith St. Paul,

for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.— I count them but dung that I may win Christ. Some translate it, from the original, chaff, others dog's meat, others excrements, dung: all agree, it is such a thing as men usually cast away from them with indignation.

4. Because it is according to the very law of marriage: *Therefore shall a man leave father and mother, and cleave unto his wife.* The Lord Christ marries himself to the souls of his saints; and for this cause the soul must forsake all, and cleave unto Christ.

5. Because Christ is a jealous God. Now jealousy is a passion in the soul, that will not endure any sharing in the object beloved. And so Christ cannot endure that we should look on any other things, so as to lust after them.

6. Because all other things can never satisfy the eye. *All things are full of labour*, saith Solomon, *man cannot utter it; the eye is not satisfied with seeing:* it is but wearied with looking on divers objects, and yet still desires new ones; but once admit it to that glorious sight of Christ, and then it rests fully satisfied.

CHAP. III.

Sect. I.—*An Explanation of the Act and Object of Looking.*

An experimental looking on Jesus, is that my text aims at: it is not a swimming knowledge of Christ, but an hearty feeling of Christ's inward workings; it is not notions of Christ, but hearty motions towards Christ, that are implied in this inward looking.

2. For the object; you must look on Jesus. It is the blessedest object that the eye of the mind can possibly fix upon. Of all objects under heaven, Jesus hath the pre-eminence in perfection, and he should have the pre-eminence in our meditation. It is he that will make us most happy when we posses him, and we cannot but be joyful to look upon him, especially when looking is a degree of possessing. Jesus signifies Saviour, it is an Hebrew name; the Greeks borrowed it from the Hebrews, the Latins from the Greeks, and all other languages from the Latins. It comes from the Hebrew word *Jehoshua*, or *Joshua*, which in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah (written after the Babylonian captivity) is Jeshua; and so is our Saviour's name always written in the Syriac translation of the New Testament. This name, Jesus, was given to Christ the Son of God, by his Father, and brought from heaven by an angel; first to Mary, and then to Joseph; and on the day when he was circumcised, as the manner was, this name was given him by his parents, as it was commanded from the Lord, by the angel Gabriel. It includes both his office, and his natures. He is the

alone Saviour of man; *for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.* And he is a perfect and absolute Saviour; *he is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him; seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.* I will not deny, but that the work of salvation is common to all the three Persons in the Trinity: it is a known rule, "All outward actions are equally common to the three Persons." For as they are all one in nature and will, so must they be also one in operation; the Father saveth, the Son saveth, and the Holy Ghost saveth; yet we must distinguish them in the manner of saving: the Father saveth by the Son; the Son saveth by paying the ransom and price of our salvation; the Holy Ghost saveth by a particular applying of that ransom unto men. Now whereas the Son pays the price of our redemption, and not the Father, nor the Holy Ghost; therefore, in this special respect, he is called our Saviour, our Jesus.

Herein is set forth the offices of Christ, the two natures of Christ, the qualities of Christ, the excellencies of Christ. Oh! what variety of sweet matter is in Jesus! he hath in him all the powders of the merchants. An holy soul cannot tire itself in viewing Jesus. We know one thing tires quickly, unless that one be all: Christ is so, and none else; he is all, and in all; all belonging to being, and all belonging to well-being. In things below Jesus, some have this excellency, and some have that, but none have all. Oh! what variety is in Jesus! variety of time, he is *Alpha and Omega;* variety of beauty, he is white and ruddy; variety of quality, he is a lion and lamb, a servant and a son; variety of excellency, he is man and God. Oh! where shall we begin in this view of Jesus? *Who shall declare his generation?* All the evangelists exhibit unto us the Saviour, but every one of them in his particular method. Mark describes not all the genealogy of Jesus, but begins his history at his baptism. Matthew searcheth out his original from Abraham. Luke follows it backwards as far as Adam. John passeth further upwards, even to the eternal generation of this *Word* that *was made flesh.* So they lead us to Jesus, mounting up four several steps: in the one, we see him only among the men of his own time; in the second, he is seen in the tent of Abraham; in the third, he is yet higher, to wit, in Adam; and finally, having traversed all ages, through so many generations, we come to contemplate him in the beginning, in the bosom of the Father, in that eternity in which he was with God before all worlds. And there let us begin, still looking unto Jesus, as he carries on the great work of our salvation from first to last, from everlasting to everlasting.

Sect. II.—*The main Doctrine and Confirmation of it.*

But for the foundation of our building, take this note—

Inward experimental looking unto Jesus, such as stirs up affections in the heart, and the effects thereof in our life, is an ordinance of Christ, a choice, an high gospel ordinance.

Or thus: inward experimental knowing, considering, desiring, hoping, believing, loving, joying, calling on Jesus, and conforming to Jesus, is the most precious ordinance of Jesus Christ.

Looking unto Jesus, is that great ordinance appointed by God for our most especial good. How many souls have blessed themselves in the use of other means, and though in them Christ hath communicated some virtue to them, yet because they did not trade more with them, they had little in comparison? Such a one as deals immediately with Christ, will do more in a day than another in a year; and therefore I call it a choice, a complete, an high gospel-ordinance.

1. Jesus is the object; and Jesus, as Jesus, as he is our Saviour, as he hath negociated, or shall yet negociate, the great business of our salvation. Looking unto, is the act; but such as includes all these acts, knowing, considering, desiring, hoping, believing, loving, joying, enjoying of Jesus, and conforming to Jesus. It is such a look as stirs up affections in the heart, and the effects thereof in our life; it is such a look as leaves a quickening upon the spirit; it is such a look as works us into a warm affection, raised resolution, an holy and upright conversation: briefly, it is an inward, experimental looking unto Jesus.

This was the Lord's charge to the Gentiles of old; *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.—And I said, behold me! behold me! unto a nation that was not called by my name.* And according to this command was their practice; *Mine eyes are ever towards the Lord,* saith David. *They looked unto him, and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed.* And according to this command is the practice of gospel believers; *We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* Instead of the vail of Mosaical figures, God hath now given to his church the clear glass of the gospel: and hence all believers under the gospel do, by contemplative faith, behold Christ, together with the glorious light of his mercy, truth, and the rest of his divine attributes; and by means thereof, they are made like unto him in the glory of holiness, and in newness of life.

Sect. III.—*Use of Reproof.*

Well then! is inward experimental looking unto Jesus a choice, an high gospel-ordinance? How may this reprove thou-

sands? how many are there that mind not this duty? The truth is, that as the whole world lies in wickedness, so the eyes of the whole world are misplaced. There are few that have a care of this choice, of this high gospel-ordinance. I shall therefore reprove both the ungodly and godly.

1. For the ungodly; not Christ, nor God, is in all their thoughts. Alas! they cannot tell what it means, to look unto Jesus. Nor speak I only of poor Indians, and other savages, who came into the world, not knowing wherefore; and go out of the world, not knowing whither; but of such as live within the Christian church, that have nothing to distinguish them from those Indian miscreants, but outward formalities, the charity of others, and their own slight imaginations. Why, alas! these are they that the Lord complains of, that *they have eyes, and see not. My people have forgotten me days without number.*

You will say, Is there any such here? Can I tax any of you, that you do not look up to Jesus? are not your eyes towards Christ in your prayers, praise, public and private duties? nay, are not you now in the duty, whilst I am speaking, and you hearing? I answer, However you may deem that you do this or that, yet God reckons it as a thing not done in these respects:—

1. When it is not done to purpose: as, if our looking to Christ makes us not like Christ; if there be no effectual impression upon the heart, Christ takes it as if we had never looked towards him at all.

2. When it is done unwillingly. Let no man deceive himself; though he cast his eyes towards heaven all the day long, if he love not his work, he doth nothing; he looks not at Jesus.

3. When a man makes it not his course to look unto Jesus. A man may come unto a carpenter's house, and take up his tools, and do something at his work, but this makes him not a carpenter, because it is not his trade. So, ungodly men may look and think of Christ; but because this is not their course and trade, they make it not their work to look to Christ; they are therefore said, not to look to him.

Consider, you that plead that you are Christians, and that you mind Christ at this very instant, that you are in the duty, even whilst I am speaking of it, and yet you neither do it to purpose, nor willingly; is it not with you as it is with them of whom Christ spake, *Many will say to me at that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name, have cast out devils? and in in thy name have done many wonderful works?* They will plead at the last day, as you plead now; but for all that, you know the answer, *I never knew you; depart from me ye workers of iniquity.*

2. For the godly, are not they careless of this duty? I know not whether through want of skill, or through want of will; but sure I am, this duty lies neglected of most of the people of God: their faults I may express in these respects:

1. In not pointing their minds towards Jesus; *I write unto you,* saith the apostle, *to stir up your minds, by way of remembrance:* it is in the original, *to awaken your pure minds;* and it was but need. Awaking, is a word that imports rousing, as birds that provoke their young ones by flight to make use of their wings: now how few are there who thus call upon themselves! It was the prophet's complaint, *No man stirs up himself to take hold of God;*—O what a shame is this! Is it fit that our understandings, which God hath entrusted us with, should be no more improved? Is it fit that our minds (those golden cabinets which God hath given us, to be filled with heavenly treasure) should either be empty, or stuffed with vanity, nothing, worse than nothing? Oh! that such glorious things as our immortal spirits, should run after vanity, which, if rightly improved, should walk with angels, should lodge themselves in the bosom of the glorious God! Do we not see how Christ is sending out to us continually? The thoughts of his heart are love, eternal love. And shall not we send out our thoughts towards him? shall not we let our minds run out towards him?

3. In not bending of their minds to this work. It may be the mind looks up, but it is so feeble, that, like an arrow shot from a bow weakly bent, it reacheth not the mark. It is the wiseman's counsel. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.* Oh! that God's people should be so lazy, dull, sluggish, slothful, in this spiritual work! As Jesus said to the multitudes concerning John, *What went ye out into the wilderness to see?* so may I ask believers, in their looking unto Jesus. What went ye out to see? When you crawl, and move, as if you had no hearts nor spirits within you, whom go ye forth to see? Him that is the Lord of glory? him that is the *brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person?* What! are such heavy and lazy aspects fit to take in such a glory as this is? You see in what large streams your thoughts fly forth to other things; and are you only languishing, weak, and feeble, in things of so great concernment? Oh! that Christians should be cold in spirituals, and hot in the pursuit of temporal things!

3. In not binding of their minds to this object, in not staying the eye on Jesus Christ. Some may give a glance at Christ, but they are presently wheeled off again. But why doth not the eye abide there? Is not Christ worthy, on whom our souls should dwell? Certainly if we love our Jesus, that love will hold us: as the load-stone, having drawn the iron, keeps it fast to the object loved. Is Christ so tender in his love towards us that he ever minds us; and shall our minds be so loose to him? shall there be no more care to bind ourselves in cords of love to him who hath bound himself in such cords of love to us?

4. In not daily exercising this blessed duty. It may be now and then they are awakened, and they get up into heaven to see

their Jesus; but it is not daily. Oh! consider, is this now and then going to heaven within the veil, to live the life of friends? is this to carry ourselves as children? What! to be so strange at home? there to be seldom, where we should always be? Is Jesus Christ such a mean thing, that a visit now and then should serve the turn? The queen of Sheba, hearing Solomon's wisdom, said, *Blessed are those thy servants, that always stand before thee, and hear thy wisdom:* if she was so taken with Solomon, remember that *a greater than Solomon is here.* And shall we deprive ourselves of that blessedness, which we might enjoy by standing always in the presence of Christ, to hear his wisdom, and to behold his glory?

O my brethren, let us take shame to ourselves, that to this day we have been so careless in sending, bending, and binding our minds to this blessed object, Jesus Christ; yea, let us blush that we have not made it our daily business. David describes the blessed man by his *delighting in the law of the Lord,* and by his *meditating thereon day and night;* how then is he to be reproved, that neither meditates on the law of the Lord, nor on the Lord, the law-maker, day and night?

Sect. IV.—*Use of Exhortation.*

Is inward, experimental looking unto Jesus, a choice and high gospel-ordinance? then I beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ; I beseech you brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, to look unto Jesus; or, if my beseeching will not prevail, yet look on me as an *ambassador of Christ;* consider as *though God did beseech you by me.* I beseech, I pray you, in Christ's stead; it is a message that I have from God to your souls, to look unto Jesus; and therefore set your hearts to all the words that I testify to you this day, for it is not a vain thing, but it is for your lives.

Oh! that I should need thus to persuade your hearts to look unto Jesus! What, is not your Jesus worthy of this? why then are your thoughts no more upon him? why are not your hearts continually with him? why are not your strongest desires, and daily delights, in, and after, the Lord Jesus? What is the matter? will not God give you leave to approach this light? will he not suffer your souls to taste and see? why then are these words in the text? why then doth he cry, and double his cry, *Behold me! behold me!* Ah! vile hearts! how delightfully and unwearyedly can we think of vanity! how freely, and how frequently, can we think of our pleasures, friends, yea, of our miseries, wrongs, sufferings, and fears! And what! is not Christ in all our thoughts? Christians, humble and cast down your sensual hearts, that have in them no more of Christ. O chide them for their wilful or weak strangeness to Christ! O turn your thoughts

from off all earthly vanities, and bend your souls to study Christ; habituate yourselves to such contemplations, and let not those thoughts be seldom or cursory, but settle upon them, dwell there, bathe your souls in those delights, drench your affections in those rivers of pleasures, or rather in the sea of consolation. Have your eyes continually set on Christ. Say not you are not unable to do thus; this must be God's work only, and therefore all our exhortations are in vain. A learned divine can tell you, though God be the chief disposer of your hearts, yet next under him you have the greatest command of them yourselves. Though without Christ you can do nothing, yet under him you may do much; or else it will be undone, and you undone through your neglect. Do your own parts, and you have no cause to distrust whether Christ will do his. It is not usual with Christ to forsake his own people in that very work he sets them on. If your souls were sound and right, they would perceive incomparably more delight in knowing, thinking, believing, loving, and rejoicing in Jesus Christ, than the soundest stomach finds in his food, or the strongest senses in the enjoyment of their objects. Now, for shame never say, you cannot reach it: *I can do all things*, saith Paul, *through Christ that strengtheneth me.* It is our sloth, our security, our carnal mind, which is enmity to God and Christ, that keeps us off.

Sect. V.—*Motives from our Wants in case of Neglect.*

To quicken us to this duty, I shall propound some moving considerations: ponder them with an impartial judgment; who knows but through the assistance of Christ they may prove effectual with your hearts, and make you resolve upon this excellent duty of looking unto Jesus.

Consider, 1. our wants in case of neglect. If Christ be not in view, there is nothing but wants.

Suppose first a Christless soul, a poor creature without any ray of this Sun of righteousness, and what a sad condition is he in! I may say of such a one—

1. He is without light: there is no oil of saving knowledge, no star of spiritual light arising in his soul. *Ye were once darkness*, saith the apostle to his Ephesians: not only dark, but darkness itself; they were wholly dark, universally dark, having no mixture nor glimpse (whilst without Christ) of spiritual light in them.

2. Such a one is without grace, without holiness. Christ is our sanctification, as well as righteousness and redemption. Where Christ is not, there is no inclination to the ways and works of sanctification.

3. Such a one is without content. The soul in this case finds nothing but emptiness and vanity in the greatest abundance. Let a man have what the world can give, yet if he have not

Christ, he is nothing worth. Christ is the marrow and fatness, the fulness and sweetness, of all our endowments ; separate Christ from them, and they are bitter, and do not please us ; empty, and do not fill us. Joram asking Jehu, *Is it peace?* was answered, *What hast thou to do with peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel, and her witchcrafts, are so many?* A Christless man asking, Is it peace, O messenger of God? can look for no other but Jehu's answer, *What hast thou to do with peace,* so long as thy lusts are so strong within thee, and thy estrangements from the Prince of peace so great? The soul that is without Jesus Christ, is an enemy to the God of peace, an alien to the way of peace. *There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God.*

4. Such a one is without life. *He that hath not the Son, hath not life,* saith John ; Christ lives not in that soul, it is a dead soul, dead in sin and trespasses. As the dead see nothing of all that sweet and glorious light which the sun casts forth upon them, so the dead in sin have no comfortable apprehension of Christ, though he shine in the gospel more gloriously than the sun at noon. And as the dead know not any thing, so the dead in sin know nothing of the wisdom of Christ guiding them, or of the holiness of Christ sanctifying them, or of the fulness of Christ satisfying them, or of the death of Christ mortifying their lusts : yea, suppose those that have known Christ, but do not now look unto Jesus, how great is the sin and sadness of those souls! Oh, the wants attending such poor creatures!

1. They have not that wisdom, knowledge, discerning of Christ, as they might have. By looking, and serious observing of Christ, we gain more and more knowledge of Christ ; but if we will not look, how should we understand those great mysteries of grace? Without looking on Christ, we cannot expect that virtue should go out of Christ

2. They do not so taste the goodness of Christ, as they might . Christ is no other unto them, but as an eclipsed star : Christ is not sweet to them in his ordinances, they find not in them that delight and refreshment, which they usually minister.—They are in the case of Barzillai, *who could not taste what he did eat, or what he did drink ; nor could hear any more the voice of singing men or of singing women :* so they cannot taste the things of God, nor hear the spiritual melody which Christ makes to the souls of them that look unto him.

3. They have not that sense of Christ's love, which those that exercise his duty have. Whilst the soul neglects Christ, it cannot possibly discern the love of Christ ; it perceives not Christ applying the doctrines of his love to the conscience : Christ appears not in his banqueting-house, he enables not the soul to pray with confidence, he makes it not joyful in the house of prayer. And hence it is, that such souls move so slowly in God's service ; they are just like Pharaoh's chariots, without wheels ; they perceive

not the love of Christ, either in the clear revelation of his secrets, or in the free community of his graces, or in the sanctifying and sweetening of their trials, or in sealing the pardon of their sins. Oh, the want! Oh, the misery of this want!

Thus far of their wants, that neglect this duty of looking unto Jesus.

Sect. VI.—*Motives from our Riches, in case we are lively in this Duty.*

2. For our riches, in case we are lively in this duty! Oh, the blessed incomes to such souls! we may reckon up here those very particulars which the other wanted:

1. That Christ gives light unto them. As the receiving of the sun gives light to the body, so the receiving of the *Sun of righteousness* gives spiritual, heavenly, comfortable light to their souls.

2. That Christ gives grace and holiness unto them. *Of his fulness we receive grace for grace.* As the print upon the wax answers to the seal, or as the characters upon the Son answers to the Father; so there are certain stamps of the grace of Christ upon the saints, that what good they do, it springs not from external motives only, but from Christ working in them.

3. That Christ gives content or satisfaction unto them. As the pearl satisfied the merchant in the parable, so Christ satisfieth the soul with understanding, with the sense of his love in the heart, with sure and blessed peace in the conscience. They that rightly look unto Jesus, may say as Jacob did, *I have enough.*

4. That Christ gives life unto them. *He that hath the Son, hath life.* He that hath Christ in his heart, as a root of life living in him, or as a king setting up his throne within him, or as a bridegroom betrothing himself in loving kindness to him, he hath life, the life of grace, and the earnest of the life of glory.

5. That Christ gives a taste of his goodness unto them. They cannot look unto him, but he makes them joyful with the feeling of himself and Spirit: and hence it is that many times they break out into psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, and make melody in their hearts unto the Lord. Here is a goodness of illumination, regeneration, sanctification, and spiritual freedom, flowing from Christ to the souls of his saints, which to carnal men is a sealed well, whose waters their palates never tasted.

6. That Christ gives the sense of his love to them. They cannot look on Christ, but they see him loving and embracing their humble souls; they see him binding up their broken hearts; they behold him gathering to himself, and bearing in the bosom of his love, and comforting with the promises of his word, their wounded spirits; they behold him, like Jacob, serving in the heat and in the cold for Rachel, serving in manifold afflictions from his cradle to his cross, to make a spouse unto himself.

7. That Christ gives the sense of his own worth and excellency unto them. They see now in Christ is wisdom surpassing the brightness of the sun, even all the treasures of wisdom; in Christ is power excelling the strength of rocks, he is not only strong, but strength itself; in Christ is honour transcending all the kings of the earth, for he is *King of kings, and Lord of lords;* in Christ is beauty excelling *the rose of Sharon, and lily of the vallies;* he is fairer than all the flowers of the field, than all the precious stones of the earth, than all the lights in the firmament, than all the saints and angels in the highest heavens.

8. That Christ gives all things unto them. *All things are yours,* saith the apostle, *whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.* All things are yours: first, all the ministers of Christ from the highest to the lowest, *whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas;* they are your servants, they are men that watch over you for your salvation. Secondly, the world is yours: indeed the world stands but for your sakes; if your number were but once completed, quickly would the world be set on fire. Thirdly, life is yours: it is a fitting you for a better life, even for eternity. Fourthly, death is yours: for you shall die just then when it is best for you. Death shall serve but as a servant to your advantage. Fifthly, things present, and things to come, are yours. *Godliness hath the promise of this life, and of that which is to come.* Sixthly, the Lord himself is yours: take God, and look on him in his greatness, in his mighty power, even this great God, the Lord of heaven and earth, is yours; he is yours, and all that he hath is yours, and all that he doth is yours, and all that he can do is yours. *I will be thine,* saith God to Abraham, *I will be to thee an exceeding great reward.* Here is a catalogue, an inventory, of a Christian's riches: have Christ, and have all. When an heathen was but asked, where all his treasure was, he answered, "Where Cyrus my friend is:" and if any asked you, where all your treasure is, you may answer, Where Christ your friend is: in this respect you may truly say, there is no end of your riches; they are called *the unsearchable riches of Christ.* Paul could find no bottom of these riches. Oh! who would not look unto Jesus? If Christ be yours, God is yours, the Father is yours, the Spirit is yours, all the promises are yours; for in Christ they are all made, and for him they shall be performed. Come, let the proud man boast in his honour, and the mighty man in his valour, and the rich man in his wealth; but let the Christian pronounce himself happy, only happy, truly happy, fully happy, in beholding Christ, enjoying Christ, having Christ, —in looking unto Jesus.

LOOKING UNTO JESUS,

FROM THE CREATION UNTIL HIS FIRST COMING.

BOOK II.

CHAP. I.

SECT. I.—*Of Christ promised by Degrees.*

IN this period we shall first lay down the object; and then direct you how to look upon it.

The object is Jesus, carrying on the work of man's salvation in that dark time before his coming in the flesh.

No sooner is the world made, and the things therein, but man was created. And now it was that God's eternal purpose was to come into execution. Indeed, at the first there was no need of Christ; for man was made in holiness, *the image of God*, and to bear rule over the rest of the visible creatures; though this his state was but of a short standing, for it was not long before Adam by his sin deprived himself, and all his posterity, of the image of God. All mankind was in his loins, so by the appointment of God all mankind partake with him in the guilt of his sins.

In this sad hour of temptation, God stept in. He will not leave man without hope: he tells the devil, who begun this mischief, *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.* At the very instant, when God was pronouncing judgment upon the several delinquents, nay, before judgment was pronounced on the persons tempted, Jesus is hinted, the covenant of grace is proclaimed. Oh! the infinite riches of the mercy of God in Christ.

But you will say, how comes Jesus in? How carried he on the great work of our salvation in this dark time?

I answer, 1. By assuming the shape of man, and so discharging some special offices. We read often of Christ's apparition before his incarnation, and then especially when he had to do with man's eternal happiness. After man had sinned, Christ appeared to Adam, then to Abraham, then to Isaac, then to Jacob, then to Moses. First, he appeared to Adam in the garden: *And they heard the voice of the Lord God, walking in the garden in the cool of the day.* God, as he is God, hath neither voice to speak, nor feet to walk, but assuming the form of a man, he exercised both; and so he was the first that

published that first promise to the world, *It shall bruise thy head.*—2. He appeared to Abraham in the plain of Mamre, where the Lord talked with Abraham; and Abraham calls him *the Judge of all the earth*, which can be ascribed to none but Christ the judge of quick and dead.—3. He appeared to Isaac, Gen. xxvi. 2.—and to Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 24, 30.—and to Moses, Exod. xx. 1, 2, 3.—and to many others: and these apparitions of Christ were as preludiums of his incarnation.

2. Christ carried on the great work of our salvation in the dark time, not by himself exhibited (as when he was incarnate) but only promised. The great King would first have his harbingers to lead the way, before he would come in person.

To this purpose we read, that as Christ, so the covenant of grace (which applies Christ to us) was first promised, and then promulgated. The covenant of promise was that covenant which God made with Adam, Abraham, Moses, and David, and all Israel, in Jesus Christ; to be incarnate, crucified, and to rise from the dead; and it was meet that the promise should go before the gospel, and be fulfilled in the gospel, that so great a good might earnestly be desired, before it was bestowed. In a time of darkness, men desire light. As the morning watch watcheth and longeth for the morning, so the obscure revelation of Christ in a promise raised the hearts of the patriarchs to an earnest desire of Christ's coming in the flesh. But in this obscurity we may observe some degrees: before the law given by Moses, the promise was more obscure; the law being given, even to the time of the prophets, the promise was a little more clear: in the time of the prophets, even to John the Baptist, it was clearer yet; as the coming of the Messias did approach nearer and nearer, so was the promise clearer and clearer still. Just as the approach of the sun is nearer or further off, so is the light that goes before it greater or lesser: in like manner was the revelation that went before Christ more dim or clear, as the rising of the *Sun of righteousness* was more remote, or nigh at hand. My present business is to set forth Jesus in the covenant of grace, as promised; and because the promise receives distinction of degrees according to the several breakings out of it to the dark world, we will consider it as it was manifested,

1. From Adam until Abraham.
2. From Abraham until Moses.
3. From Moses until David.
4. From David until the Babylonish captivity.
5. From the Captivity until Christ.

In every of these periods will appear further and further discoveries of God's mercy in Christ; of our Jesus carrying on the great work of man's salvation in that dark time.

SECT. II.—*Of the Covenant of Promise, as manifest in Adam.*

THE covenant of grace is a compact made betwixt God and man, touching reconciliation, and life eternal, by Christ. This gracious covenant was, immediately after the fall, expressed in these words; *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

This promise contains good news of the overthrow of Satan's kingdom, and of man's freedom by the death of Christ.

For the sense of the words we shall open these terms, 1. Who is the serpent? 2. Who is the woman? 3. What is the seed of the serpent? What is the seed of the woman? 5. What is that *hu* (in our bible translated *it?*) 6. What is the serpent's head, and the bruising of it? 7. What is the heel of the seed of the woman, and the bruising of it? 8. Amongst whom was the enmity, or rather enmities? (for in the text we find many;) *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed.*

1. Who is the serpent? It was both Satan and the serpent; the serpent possessed of the devil. Satan could not provoke our first parents to sin by any inward temptation, nor could he enter into their bodies or minds; and therefore he presumed to take a beast of the earth, and by disposing of his tongue, he speaks within him.

Such was God's love to man, that he condemns both the author and instrument of that evil: as one that in anger breaks the sword wherewith his son or his friend was wounded. The serpent is punished according to the letter of the text, and Satan in the spiritual meaning.

2. The woman, wheresoever mentioned in this text, is Eve, and none but Eve; she it was whom the tempter had seduced, and, in just judgment for her familiarity with the tempter, God meets with her, saying to the serpent, *I will put enmity between thee and the woman.*

3. The seed of the serpent is taken collectively, for all the families of devils, for *the devil and his angels*, as Christ calls them; and for all the sons of the devil, *i. e.* for all reprobate men, whose father and prince is the devil; as Christ told the Jews, *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do:* and as John tells us, *He that committeth sin is of the devil.* In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil.

4. The seed of the woman is that posterity of the woman which do not degenerate into the seed of the serpent. Hence *all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution*, saith the apostle: *And I will put enmity*, saith God, *between*

thee and the woman; also between thy seed and her seed. And who can deny but these enmities have been ever since betwixt Satan's brood and the saints?

5. What is that *hu*, (in our bible translated, *it?*) *It shall bruise thy head.* He, or it, or that same seed, *i. e.* one person of that same seed, even Jesus, the Son of the living God. Here is the first hint of Jesus that ever was read or heard of in this world. This was the first gospel that ever was published after the creation. Oh, blessed news, fit for God's mouth to speak, and to break first to the world now fallen! As David alone of all the host of Israel goes forth to fight with Goliath, and overcomes him; so Christ alone, of all the seed of the woman, was to fight with the serpent, to overcome him, and to bruise his head.

(2.) The bruising of the head doth plainly discover this *it*, or *he*, is Jesus Christ; for none can bruise the serpent's head but only God. *The God of peace*, saith the apostle, *shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.* Now there was none of the seed of the woman, that was ever God, but only Christ, God-man, blessed for ever; and therefore it must needs be Christ, and only Christ, that can bruise this serpent's head.

(3.) God himself in other places of scripture doth expressly declare that this seed here promised is Christ. Mark but where this promise is repeated to the patriarchs, as when the Lord said to Abraham, *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed:* and when the Lord said to David, *I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons, and I will establish his kingdom;* and you may see it clear that this seed is Christ, and only Christ: that promise to Abraham, the apostle so interprets, *Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made; he saith not, and to seeds, as of many, but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ:* and that promise to David, the prophet so interprets, *He shall sit upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it.*—Who is that? In the former verse, his name is *Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace.*

Yet I will not deny, but by way of participation this promise may pertain to the whole body of Christ: *Through him that loved us, we are more than conquerors*, saith the apostle. We may conquer Satan, though not in our own strength; and so in a secondary sense, by way of communication with Christ, under this seed all the faithful may be contained: 1. Because the head and members are all one body. Both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all one. 2. Because the faithful are called the seed of Christ. *When thou shalt make thy soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed.* 3. Because Satan's overthrow by Christ our head is diffused to all the members. In this sense many extend this seed to the whole body of Christ; but

primarily and properly it belongs to none but the Lord Jesus Christ.

6. What is the serpent's head, and the bruising of it? 1. For the serpent's head, it is the power, rage, reign, and kingdom of Satan. It is observed, that in the head of a serpent lies the strength, power, and life of a serpent; so by a phrase of speech fitted to the condition of this serpent that was Satan's instrument, God tells the devil of the danger of his head, *i. e.* of his power and kingdom. Now this power and kingdom of Satan consists more especially in sin and death; *for the sting of death is sin*, and the power of death is in Satan. 2. For the bruising of this head, it is the overthrowing of Satan's power. *He shall bruise thy head, i. e.* Christ shall break thy power, Christ shall destroy sin and death, *and him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil.* I say Christ shall do it, though, as I have said, in a secondary sense the faithful shall do it. Christ overcomes by his own power, and the faithful overcome by the power of Christ. The serpent's head is bruised, *i. e.* the devil, and sin, and death, and hell, are overthrown; not only the devil in his person, but the works of the devil, which by the fall he had planted in our natures; as, pride, vain-glory, ignorance, lust; not only Satan's works, but the fruits and effects of his works, as death and hell; so that all the faithful may sing with Paul, *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord?*

7. What is the heel of the seed of the woman, and the bruising of it? 1. The heel is the humanity of Christ. 2. The bruising of his heel, is the miseries, mockings, woundings, death and burial, of Christ, all which he endured in his heel, *i. e.* in his humanity; or, it extends further, to all the hurts, reproaches, afflictions, persecutions, of the faithful, by the devil and his agents.

8. Amongst whom was the enmity, or this hostile war? We find in the text three hosts, and three battles:

1. Betwixt Satan and the woman: *I will put enmity between thee and the woman: i. e.* betwixt thee, the seducer, and her whom thou hast seduced. This enmity is opposed to the amity which had been between the woman and the serpent; not but that enmity must be betwixt the devil and man, as well as betwixt the devil and the woman: but because the woman had more tampered with Satan, and, being deceived by Satan, was first in the transgression, therefore she only is named; *I will put enmity between thee and the woman.*

2. Betwixt Satan's seed, and the seed of the woman. *I will put enmity*, not only between thee and the woman, but also *between thy seed and her seed;* as if he had said, This enmity shall not cease with the death of the woman, but it shall continue

to her seed, and to her seed's seed, even to the end of the world. We see to this day how the serpent and serpent's seed are warring against the church; and a wonder it is, considering the malice of the enemy, that there is a church upon earth, but only, that we have Christ's promise, *The gates of hell shall not prevail against it:* and, *Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.*

3. Betwixt Christ and the serpent. This is a bloody conflict on both sides. *He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.* 1. *He shall bruise thy head;* Christ shall break thy power. He fights not so much with the seed, as with the serpent: if Satan be overthrown, his seed cannot stand. 2. *Thou shalt bruise his heel;* thou shalt afflict him and his, thou shalt cast out of thy mouth a flood of persecutions; thou shalt make war with him, and all them which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

We learn hence, 1. That a Saviour was promised from the beginning of the world. 2. That this Saviour should free all his saints from sin, death, and hell; the head and the power of the devil. 3. That to this end this Saviour should be a Mediator; for God would not grant an immediate pardon, but the promised seed must first intervene. 4. That this Mediator should be of the seed of the woman, that is, a man, and yet stronger than the devil, endued with a divine power, and so he is God. 5. That this Man-God should, according to his priestly office, be a sacrifice for sin, the serpent should *bruise his heel;* he should suffer and die for the people, and yet, according to his kingly office, he should overcome Satan; for he *should bruise his head,* overthrow his kingdom, and make us *more than conquerors.* 6. That this promise of Christ, and of our justification, is free; God, of mere mercy and free grace, brings forth this promise. There could be now after the fall no merit in man; and even now he promiseth remission of sins and life eternal, in, for, and through, the Lord Jesus Christ. No question but in belief of this promise, the patriarchs and fathers of old obtained life, and glory, and immortality. *By faith, the elders obtained a good report. By faith, Abel obtained witness that he was righteous. By faith, Enoch was translated, that he should not see death. By faith, Noah became heir of the righteousness of Christ.* And how should it but revive us in these last times, to hear that the first thing that ever God did after the world was fallen, was this act of mercy, to make a promise of Christ, and to reconcile lost man to himself through the same Jesus Christ? Surely he began to do that soon, which he meant to be always doing, even to the end of the world. Thus far of the promise, as it was manifested from Adam to Abraham.

Sect. III.—*Of the Covenant of Promise, as manifested to Abraham.*

The second breaking forth of this gracious covenant was to Abraham: and now it shines in a more glorious light than it did before. At first it was propounded in dark terms; but in this second manifestation, we have it laid down in plainer terms: *I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generation, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee.* For the right understanding of this, we shall examine these particulars:—

1. What a covenant is?
2. What is the establishing of this covenant?
3. Betwixt whom is the covenant to be established?
4. For what time is the established covenant to endure?
5. What are the privileges of this covenant?
6. What is the condition of this covenant?
7. Who is the head, both as the undertaker, purchaser, and treasurer, upon whom this covenant is established?

1. What is a covenant? It is a contract of mutual peace and good-will, obliging parties on both hands to the performance of mutual offices. Thus was the covenant betwixt God and Abraham: there was a mutual stipulation in it on God's part, to perform his promises of temporal, spiritual, and eternal grace; and on Abraham's part, to receive this grace by faith, and to perform due obedience to God. Hence a little nearer, we say the covenant is a mutual compact betwixt God and man, whereby God promised all good things, especially eternal happiness, unto man; and man doth promise to walk before God in all acceptable, free, and willing obedience; expecting all good from God, and happiness in God, according to his promise, for the praise and glory of his grace. Others describe the covenant of grace thus: "The covenant of grace is a free and gracious compact, which God, of his mere mercy in Jesus Christ, hath made with sinful man, promising unto him pardon of sins, and eternal happiness, if he will but repent of sin, and embrace mercy reaching forth by faith unfeigned, and walk before God in willing, faithful, and sincere obedience." In this description many things are considered; as 1. That the author of this covenant is God; not as our Creator, but as our merciful God and Father in Christ Jesus. 2. That the cause of this covenant is not any worth, or dignity, or merit in man, but the mere mercy, love, and favour of God. 3. That the foundation of this covenant is Jesus Christ, in and through whom we are reconciled unto God; for since God and man were separated by sin, no covenant can pass betwixt them, no reconciliation can be expected, nor pardon obtained, but in and through a Mediator. 4. That the party covenanted with is sinful man; the fall of our first parents was

the occasion of this covenant; and God was pleased to permit the fall, that he might manifest the riches of his mercy in man's recovery. 5. That the form of this covenant stands, on God's part, in gracious and free promises of forgiveness, holiness, and happiness; and on man's part, in a restipulation of such duties as will stand with the free grace and mercy of God in Christ. 6. That the stipulation, on man's part required, is repentance from sin, belief in the promises, and a yielding of fear, reverence, worship, and obedience, to God, according to his word.

2. What is the establishing of this covenant? The Lord had before made a covenant with Abraham, Gen. xv. 4, 5. And now he doth not abolish the former and make another, but rather confirms and establisheth the former. It may be there was some doubting in Abraham, but now God would assure him infallibly of his will; so he adds the seal of circumcision, *Ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin*, saith God, *and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you*. But what is circumcision to the covenant? Much every way. Circumcision was not without shedding of blood, because the covenant was not yet established in the blood of the Messiah: sure there was much in this, however the right of itself was nothing; yet as it led the faithful patriarchs to the blood of Christ, and as it assured the purging away of sin by the blood of Christ, and as it signed the circumcision of the heart by the Spirit of Christ, so it found acceptance with God.

3. Betwixt whom is the covenant to be established? *Betwixt me and thee*, saith God, *and thy seed after thee*. The two heads of this covenant are God and Abraham; on God's part are, the whole Trinity of persons, the blessed angels, and all the host of heaven; on Abraham's part are all his seed, i. e. the spiritual seed of Abraham. Now, under the seed, 1. all believing Jews, and 2. all Gentiles, are comprehended. All may be called the spiritual seed of Abraham, that walk in the steps of the faith of Abraham; and indeed thus runs the promise: *In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed*, Gen. xii. 3. *And in thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed*, Gen. xviii. 18. Christians! here is your happiness; the covenant was not written for Abraham's sake alone, but for us also, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. You may think all this while we are only discovering the privileges of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and of the Jews; no, blessed be God, heaven is no freer to a Jew than to a Gentile. *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, male nor female;—but if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

4. For what time is the established covenant to endure? It is not for a few days, or months, or years, but for ever and ever: it is an everlasting covenant; and indeed, the word *established* sounds this way; *I will establish my covenant*, I will have it stand and continue for ever.

5. What are the privileges of the covenant? I answer, As they are great things, and great blessings, which our great God promiseth, so they are very many and numerous. The covenant is full of blessings, it is a rich store-house, replenished with all manner of blessings; it is not dry, nor barren, but like the fat olive or fruitful vine; it is a well of salvation, a fountain of good things, a treasure full of goods or unsearchable riches, which can never be emptied. Hence it is that our narrow capacities can never apprehend the infinite grace that this covenant contains; yet as we may see things darkly in a map, so let us endeavour, as we are able, to view them in some map; that by the little we see, we may be raised up to the consideration of things not seen, which shall be revealed in due time.

The privileges of the covenant are folded up in the promises of it: every promise contains a privilege, but the time of unfolding every promise is not yet come. Then only shall all the promises of all sorts be unfolded, when the heavens as a vesture shall be folded up. I shall, for the present, confine myself to those promises and privileges which were manifested to Abraham. And they were,

1st. Of things temporal. Thus we read God promiseth Abraham, *I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee, and unto thy seed will I give this land.*——*By myself have I sworn,* saith the Lord, *that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand upon the sea-shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies.*

(1.) *I will make of thee a great nation.* It seemed a thing incredible, because Abraham was old, and Sarah was barren and old; yet for all this, God is all-sufficient: Abraham shall have his desire, he shall be a father, not only of a few children, but of a numerous nation, yea, of many nations.

(2) I will bless thee, saith God: and this blessing had relation to his wealth: *Abraham was very rich in cattle, in silver and in gold.* No question those riches came from this blessing: *The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich.*

(3.) *I will make thy name great,* saith God. No monarch was ever so famous in conquering nations, as Abraham for his faith and obedience. God hath magnified his name amongst the Hebrews, who for these three thousand years and upwards have acknowledged none, except Moses, greater than Abraham: and God hath so magnified his name amongst Christians, that all believers look upon it as a glory to be called *children of Abraham.*

(4.) *Unto thy seed will I give this land,* saith God, *as an everlasting possession,* Gen. xvii. 8. The answer is, that the word translated *everlasting*, doth not ever signify that which shall have

no end, but an age, a term, or continuance; as it was said of Samuel, *He shall appear before the Lord, and there abide forever: i. e.* as long as he lived. And the desolations of the captivity were called *perpetual desolations, i. e.* long desolations, even for seventy years.

(2d.) Of things spiritual thus we read, *Fear not, Abraham, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward;* I am God all-sufficient or omnipotent, the Almighty God, and I will be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. Oh, what precious promises are these!—1. I am thy shield, to keep thee from all evil, such a shield that no creature can pry through, such a shield as shall cover thee over; nay, such a shield as shall cover thee about. 2. *I am thy exceeding great reward: I am the Almighty God: I will be a God unto thee.* This is the very soul of the covenant, and of all the promises of God. All I am is thine, myself, my goods, my grace, my glory, whatsoever is in me, all that I have, and all my attributes, are thine. My power, my wisdom, my goodness, my riches, whatsoever is mine in the whole world, I will give it thee for thy portion; I and all that I have are thine, for thy use. Christians! was not this an exceeding great reward? Who can understand the height and depth, and length and breadth, of this reward?—Surely happy is the people that is in such a case; yea, *happy is that people whose God is the Lord.*

6. What is the condition of this covenant? I answer, the condition of the covenant of grace is faith, and only faith; to this purpose it was said of Abraham, *He believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness.* And that act of faith, whereby Abraham believed that he should have a son, and that his children should possess the land of Canaan, was a shadow, a pledge, of that main act of faith, whereby he believed the promised seed, in whom himself and all the nations of the earth should be blessed. But let this be remembered, that Abraham did not only believe the temporal promises, but every promise; as, *I will be thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward:* Now who is our shield, but Christ? and who is our reward, but Christ? Especially he believed the promise of the seed; and who is the head of the seed, but Christ? Yea, he believed in that promised seed, in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed; and who was that, but Christ? *Your Father Abraham,* saith Christ, *rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad.* He saw it! how could he see it? *Thou art not yet fifty years old,* said the Jews, *and hast thou seen Abraham?* or could Abraham see thee, or thy day? Yes, even then he saw it when he believed in Christ, he could see it no other ways but by faith; and therefore no question he believed in Christ, and that *was counted to him for righteousness.*

7. Who is the head, both as undertaker, and purchaser, and treasurer, upon whom this covenant is established? I answer,

Christ: *All the promises of God in him are yea and amen, unto the glory of God by us.* This was darkly set forth in the first manifestation of the covenant to Adam, but in this second, it is fully expressed and often repeated; thus, Gen. xii. 3. *In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed;* and, Gen. xviii. 18. All the nations of the earth shall be blessed in Abraham, and Gen. xxii. 18. *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.* In comparing these texts, we have a clear understanding thereof: *in thee,* in Abraham, shall all the families and nations of the earth be blessed; but lest Abraham himself should be thought author of this universal blessing, therefore is the explication, in thee, *i. e.* in *thy seed;* which, saith the Apostle expressly, is Jesus Christ.

Thus far of the covenant of promise, as it was manifested from Abraham to Moses.

Sect. IV.—*Of the Covenant of Promise as manifested to Moses.*

The next breaking forth of this gracious covenant was to Moses. The revenging justice of God had now seized on mankind for many generations, so that now it was high time for God in the midst of wrath to remember mercy, and to break out into a clearer expression of the promise. To this purpose the Lord calls up Moses to mount Sinai, and there of his infinite love and undeserved mercy, he makes and renews his covenant with him and the children of Israel. *I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage: Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*

For the right understanding of this, we shall examine these particulars:

1. Whether the law was delivered in a covenant way?
2. In what sense is the law a covenant of grace?
3. How may it appear that the law in any sense is a covenant of grace?
4. Why should God in the law deal with us in a covenant-way, rather than a mere absolute supreme way?
5. What are the good things promised in this expression of the covenant?
6. What is the condition of this covenant on our part?
7. Who was the mediator of this covenant?
8. What of Christ, and his death, do we find in this manifestation of the covenant?

For the first, Whether the law was delivered in a covenant way?—It is affirmed on these grounds:

1st. In that it hath the name of a covenant. 2d. In that it hath the real properties of a covenant.—(1). The name of a covenant, as it appears in these texts:—*And the Lord said unto Moses,*

Write these words; for after the tenor of these words, I have made a covenant with thee, and with Israel. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.— And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even the ten commandments, and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.

(2.) The law hath the real properties of a covenant, which are the mutual consent and stipulation on both sides. You may see a full relation of this in Exod. xxiv. 3—8. *And Moses came and told all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do. And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning,—and he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people; and they said, All that the Lord hath said will wê do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.* In the words you may observe these properties of a covenant;—1. That God on his part expresseth his consent and willingness to be their God. 2. That the people on their part give their full consent and ready willingness to be his servants.

2. In what sense is the law a covenant of grace? I answer, The law may be considered in several senses, as, 1. Sometimes it signifies largely any heavenly doctrine, whether it be promise or precept; and in this sense the apostle tells us of the law of works, and of the law of faith. 2. Sometimes it signifies any part of the Old Testament, in which sense Jesus answered the Jews, *Is it not written in you law, I said ye are gods?* 3. Sometimes, it signifies the whole economy, and peculiar dispensation, of God's worship unto the Jews; in which sense it is said to continue until John, *The law and the prophets were until John.* 4. Sometimes it is taken for some acts of the law only, *Against such there is no law.* 5. Sometimes it is taken only for the ceremonial law, *The law having a shadow of good things to come.* 6. Sometimes it is taken for that part of the moral law which is merely perceptive, without any promise at all. 7. Sometimes it is taken for the whole moral law, with the preface and promises added to it; and in this last sense we take it, when we say it is a covenant of grace.

3. How may it appear that the law in this sense is a covenant of grace?—It appears, (1.) By that contract betwixt God and Israel before the promulgation of the law. *If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people, for all the earth is mine; and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.* Whereunto the prophet Jeremiah hath reference, saying, *Obey my voice, and do according to all which I command you, so shall*

you be my people, and I will be your God. Both these scriptures speak of the moral law, or ten commandments, containing the preface and promises; and how should that law be any other but a covenant of grace, which runs in this tenor,—I will be your God, and you shall be my people; my peculiar treasure; a kingdom of priests, an holy nation, if you will hear and obey my commandments. Surely these privileges could never have been obtained by a covenant of works. What! To be a kingdom of priests, an holy nation, a peculiar treasure to the Lord? What! To be beloved of God as a desirable treasure (for so it is in the original,) which a king delivers not into the hands of any of his officers, but keepeth it to himself? This cannot be of works; no, no, these are privileges vouchsafed of mere grace in Jesus Christ; and therefore Peter applies this very promise to the people of God under the gospel, 1 Pet. ii. 9.

(2.) It appears by that contract betwixt God and Israel in the promulgation of the law; then it was that God proclaimed himself to be the God of Israel, saying, *I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.* This is a preface to the whole law, prefixed as a reason to persuade obedience to every commandment. But all acknowledge that is a free covenant, which promiseth pardon of sin, and requireth faith in the Messiah. When God saith to Israel—I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt—doth he not propound himself as their King, Judge, Saviour, and Redeemer; yea, and spiritual Redeemer, from their bondage of sin and Satan, whereof that temporal deliverance from Egypt was a type?

4. Why should God in the law deal with us in a covenant-way rather than in a mere absolute supreme way? I answer, (1.) In respect of God: it was his pleasure in giving the law not only to manifest his wisdom, and power, and sovereignty, but his faithfulness, and truth, and love, and the glory of his grace. If he had given the precept without any promise, he might fully have discovered his supreme power, but his dear love and faithfulness could not have been known. Now therefore let the world take notice of his singular love and faithfulness; as Moses said to Israel, *Because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the hands of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him, and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.*

(2.) In respect of us, God would rather deal with us in a covenant-way, than in a mere absolute supreme way, upon these grounds:—1. That he might bind us the faster to himself. A covenant binds on both parts. The Lord doth not bind himself

to us, and leave us free; no, *I will bring you,* saith God, *into the bond of the covenant.* You may say a command binds as well as a covenant. It is true; but a covenant doth, as it were, twist the cords of the law, and double the precept upon the soul. When it is only a precept, then God alone commands it; but when I have made a promise to it, then I command it and bind it upon myself.

(3.) That our obedience might be more willing and free. An absolute law might seem to extort obedience, but a covenant and agreement makes it clearly to appear more free and willing. This is the nature of the covenant of grace: First, God promiseth mercy, to be our exceeding great reward; and then we promise obedience, to be his free, willing people: and thus we become God's, not only by a property founded in his sovereign power and love, but by a property growing out of our own voluntary consents. We are not only his people, but his willing people.

(4.) That our consolations might be stronger; that in all our difficulties and distresses we might ever have recourse to the faithfulness and love of God. This indeed was the prime end why God delivered his law in way of a covenant, that he might endear himself to us, and so draw us to him with cords of love. Had God so pleased, he might have required all obedience from us, and when he had done all, he might have reduced us into nothing, or at least not have given us heaven for an inheritance, or himself for a portion; but his love is such, that he will not only command but he will covenant, that he might further express and communicate his love. How then should this encourage us to go to God in all distresses?—Oh! what thankful loving thoughts should we have of God that would thus infinitely condescend to covenant with us!

5. What are the good things promised in his expression of the covenant? Not to reckon up the temporal promises, the great mercies of God are expressed in these terms: *I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.* This is the great promise of the covenant, it is as great as God himself. That we may better see it and know it, I shall take it in pieces: the gold is so pure, that it is pity the least filing should be lost. Here God describes himself by these notes:—1. By his only eternal and perfect essence, *I am the Lord.* 2. By the plurality of persons in that one essence, *I am the Lord God, Jehovah Elohim.* 3. By the propriety his people have in Jehovah Elohim, *I am the Lord thy God.* 4. By the fruit of that propriety in reference to Israel, *Which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*

(1.) *I am Jehovah.* This name denotes both his being, and his performance of his promise. Thus he was not known to the

patriarchs: they only were sustained by faith in God's almighty power, without receiving the thing promised; but when the Israelites came to receive the promise, and to have full knowledge and experience of his power and goodness, then they knew the efficacy of his name Jehovah.

(2.) *I am Jehovah Elohim.* This denotes the plurality of persons. God, in delivering of the law, doth not only shew his being, but the manner of his being, or the trinity of persons in the unity of essence. The word signifies strong, potent, mighty; or if we express it plurally, it signifies the almighties, or the almighty powers. Hence the scriptures apply the general name, God, to the persons severally, the Father is God, Heb. i. 1. 2. The Son is God, Acts xx. 28. And the Holy Ghost is God, Acts v. 3, 4.

(3.) *I am the Lord thy God.* Herein is the propriety, and indeed here is the mercy, that God speaks thus to every faithful soul, *I am thy God.* By this appropriation God gives us a right in him, yea, a possession of him. 1. A right in him: as the woman may say of him to whom she is married, this man is my husband, so may every faithful soul say of the Lord, he is my God. 2. A possession of him: God doth not only shew himself unto us, but he doth communicate himself unto us in his holiness, mercy, truth, grace, and goodness; hence it is said, *We have fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* Herein God gives himself to be wholly ours, consider God essentially or personally. Consider Jehovah Elohim, all is ours. God, in his essence and glorious attributes, communicates himself to us for good; and God, personally considered, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, they all enter into covenant with us.

[1.] The Father enters into covenant with us. He promiseth to be a Father to us: hence saith the Lord, *Israel is my Son, my first-born.*

[2.] The Son is in covenant with us, and speaks to us in this language; *Thou art mine; I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, and therefore thou art mine.* This is Christ's covenant with us; he brings us back to his Father, from whose presence we were banished, and sets us before his face for ever. He promiseth to restore us to the adoption of sons; and not only to the title, but to the inheritance of sons, that we might be where he is.

[3.] The Holy Ghost makes a covenant with us. *By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified; whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness. This is the covenant that I will make with them; I will put my law into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.* I know the Father is implied in this, yet here is the proper work of the Holy Ghost. What the Father hath purposed, and the Son hath purchased for us, that the Holy Ghost effects in us. He applies the blood of Christ for

the remission of sins; he writes the law in our hearts; he comforts us in our sadness; he supports us in our faintings, and guides us in our wanderings. Now in that he effects these things for us, and in our behalf, he is said to make a covenant with us. Thus Elohim, God personally considered, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are in covenant with us.

(4.) Let us see the fruit of this in reference to Israel:—which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. This was God's promise long before to Abraham: *Know of a surety, that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years: And also that nation whom they shall serve, will I judge; and afterwards they shall come out with great substance.* See here, Israel must be strangers in the land of Egypt, and serve the Egyptians four hundred years; but then he will bring them out of the land of Egypt, and out of their servile bondage. Why, this argues that God is Jehovah. Now he has performed what he had foretold; and this argues that God in Christ is our Redeemer: for what was this redemption from Egypt, but a type of our freedom from sin, death, and hell?

6. What is the condition of this covenant on our part? The condition of this covenant is faith in Jesus, which is implied in the promise, *I will be thy God,* or *I am the Lord thy God;* and commanded in the precept built upon it; thou shalt have me to be thy God, or, thou shalt have no other gods before me. But where is faith in Jesus Christ mentioned, either in promise or precept? I answer, If it be not expressed, it is very plainly intended. God is not the God of Israel, but in and through the Mediator; neither can Israel take God to be their God, but by faith in the Messiah. But to go further; What is the meaning of this first commandment in the affirmative part, but to have one God in Christ to be our God by faith? It is true there is no mention made of Christ, or faith; but that is nothing. There is no mention of love, and yet our Saviour discovers it there; when the lawyer tempted Christ,—*Master, which is the great commandment in the law?* You know Christ's answer, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; this is the first and great commandment,* Matt. xxii. 36, 37, 38. Now as our Saviour discovers love there; so in like manner is faith and Christ there, the necessary consequents.

But you may object, What say we to obedience? Is not that rather the condition of this covenant in the law? The law is considered either more strictly, as it is a rule of righteousness, setting forth life upon no other terms but perfect obedience, or more largely, as that whole doctrine delivered on mount Sinai, with the preface and promises adjoined: in the former sense it is a covenant of works, but in the latter it is a covenant of grace.

And yet I dare not say, that as the law is a covenant of grace, it doth exclude obedience. In some sort, obedience, as well as faith, may be said to be a condition of the covenant of grace. I shall give you my thoughts in this distinction: obedience to all God's commands, is either considered as a cause of life, or as a qualification. In the former sense, it cannot be a condition of the covenant of grace; but in the latter, it may. If by condition we understand whatsoever is required on our part, as precedent, concomitant, or subsequent, to the covenant of grace, repentance, faith, and obedience are all conditions: but if by condition we understand whatsoever is required on our part as the cause of the good promised, though only instrumental, why then faith is the only condition. Faith and obedience are opposed in the matter of justification and salvation; not that they cannot stand together, (for they are inseparably united,) but because they cannot meet together in one court, as the cause of justification or salvation. Now, when we speak of the condition of the covenant of grace, we intend such a condition as is among the number of true causes. Indeed, in the covenant of works obedience is required as the cause of life; but in the covenant of grace, though obedience must accompany faith, yet only faith is the cause of life contained in the covenant.

7. Of this covenant, Moses was a typical, but Christ the spiritual, Mediator. There is a great deal of difference betwixt Moses and Christ, as, 1. Moses only received the law, and delivered it to the people; but Christ, our true Moses, fulfilled it. 2. Moses broke the tables, to shew how we in our nature had broken the law; but Christ, our true Moses, repairs it. 3. Moses had the law only writ in tables of stone; but Christ writes it in the tables of our hearts. 4. Moses was mere man; but Christ is God as well as man. 5. Moses was only a servant in God's house; but Christ is a son, yea, Christ is Lord of his own house, the church. 6. Moses's meditation was of this use, to shew what was the true manner of worshipping God; but he did not inspire power to follow it: he could not reconcile men to God, as of himself; and therefore it appeared that there was need of another reconciler, *viz.* the Lord Jesus Christ.

8. What do we find of Christ, and of his death, in this manifestation of the covenant? I answer, (1.) In delivering the law, we find something of Christ. Some of the learned are of opinion, that Christ the Son of God did, in the shape of a man, deliver the law.

(2.) In the law itself, as it is a covenant of grace, we find something of Christ: in the preface he proclaims himself to be our God; and in the first commandment we are bound to take this God to be our God: and in the second, he gives us a double motive to obey; *For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God; I shew mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my*

commandments. And in the fifth commandment he gives a promise of long life in Canaan, which is either to be looked at as a type of heaven, or literally, for a prosperous condition here on earth; but, howsoever, it is by virtue of the covenant, and as a testimony of God's love. Now all these promises are made in Christ. God is not our God, but in and through Jesus Christ. God will not shew mercy unto thousands, nor unto one of all the thousands of his saints, but as they are in Jesus Christ. God will not give us long life here, or eternity hereafter, but in, for, and through, the Lord Jesus Christ. What if Moses writ not down the word Christ, yet certainly Moses writ of Christ: his words imply Christ, as Christ himself told the Jews, *Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for Moses wrote of me.* Surely Christ was, if not the only subject, yet the only scope, of all the writings of Moses; and therefore in the law itself, you see, we find something of Christ.

(3.) In the exposition of the law, as Moses gives it here and there, we find something of Christ. Yea, if we observe it, Moses brought something more to the expression of Christ, and of the covenant of grace, than ever was before. In the first promise it was revealed, that Christ should be the seed of the woman; in the second manifestation of the promise, it was revealed that Christ should be of the seed of Abraham; but in Moses's writings, and Moses's time, we learn more expressly that Christ was to be incarnate, and to have his conversation amongst men. The promise runs thus: *And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God; and they shall know that I am the Lord their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell amongst them; I am the Lord their God.* Again, Moses, writing of Christ, *The Lord thy God,* saith he, *will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him shall ye hearken.* Was not this a plain expression: Peter, in his sermon to the Jews, preached Jesus Christ; and he tells the Jews, that this Jesus Christ was preached unto them before. When before? Even in Moses's time; and for proof he cites this very text, *For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things, whatsoever he shall say unto you.*

(4.) In the confirmation of the law, we find something of Christ. It was confirmed by seals and sacrifices. What were all these but a type of Christ? In the former expression of the covenant we found the seal of circumcision, but now it pleased God to add unto the former another seal for confirmation of their faith, namely, the passover. And was not this a type of Christ, the immaculate Lamb of God, *which taketh away the sins of the world?* Again, in this manifestation Moses brought in the priesthood as a settled ordinance, to offer sacrifices for the peo-

ple: and was not this a type of Christ, our true and unchangeable high priest? No question, the death and resurrection of Christ, the priesthood and kingdom of Christ, were prefigured by the sacrifices, the brazen serpent, the priesthood of Aaron, and the kingdom of Israel. And I cannot but think that the godly spiritual Jews understood this very well; and that these did not rest in sacrifices or sacraments, but that by faith they did really enjoy Christ in them.

(5.) In the intention of God's giving the law, we find something of Christ. The very end of God in promulging the law, was, that upon the sense of our impossibility to keep it, and of our danger to break it, we should desire earnestly, and seek out diligently for Jesus Christ. To this purpose, saith the apostle, *The law is our schoolmaster, to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.* A schoolmaster, you know, doth not only correct, but also teach: so the law doth not only curse if the work be not done, but it shews where power and help is to be had, that is, from the Lord Jesus Christ. If this be so, how much to blame are they that, under pretence of free grace and Christ, cry down the law? Rather let us cry it up; and this is the way to set up free grace and Christ. Surely, he that discovers his defects by the perfect rule of the law, and whose soul is humbled because of those defects, must needs prize Christ, desire Christ, advance Christ in his thoughts, above all the men in the world.

And thus far of the covenant of promise, as it was manifested from Moses to David.

Sect. V.—*Of the Covenant of Promise, as manifested to David.*

The next breaking forth of this gracious covenant was to David; and in this manifestation, appears yet more of Christ. The expression of it is chiefly in these words: *Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure.*

For the right understanding of this, we shall examine these particulars:—

1. Who is the author of this covenant?
2. To whom is the covenant made?
3. What is this, that the covenant is said to be made?
4. How is the covenant ordered?
5. Wherein is the covenant sure?
6. Whether is Christ more clearly manifested in this breaking forth of the covenant, than in any of the former?

1. Who is the author of this covenant? David says, *He hath made it:* He, *i. e.* God; *The rock of Israel, the everlasting rock; the rock of their salvation,* Psal. viii. 2. *The rock of their refuge,* Psal. xciv. 22. *Their rock, and their Redeemer,*

Psal. xix. 14. The Psalmist is frequent in this style, to shew that God is the mighty, stable, and immutable defence of all the faithful, who fly unto him, and will trust in him. He is such a rock as will not fail his creatures. Man is unstable; but he is God, and not man, who is the author of this covenant.

2. To whom is the covenant made? Why, saith David, *He hath made with me an everlasting covenant; i. e.* either with Christ the antitype, or else with David himself, the type of Christ. Some are wholly for a covenant betwixt God and Christ, and they deny any such thing as a covenant betwixt God and man: but are not the testimonies express? *Take heed to yourselves, lest you forget the covenant which the Lord hath made with you.* And, *I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.* Oh! take heed of such doctrines as tend unto licentiousness; the covenant God makes with us binds us faster to God, and if there be no covenant betwixt God and us, it opens a gap to the looseness of our spirits; for how should we be charged with unfaithfulness unto God, if we have not all entered into a covenant with God?

3. What is this, that the covenant is said to be made? This exhibits to us the freeness of God's entering into covenant with us. When God makes a covenant, then he gives grace unto all that he takes into covenant with him. *The Lord set his love upon you,* said Moses to Israel, *to take you into covenant with him; not because ye were more in number than other people, but because he loved you, and chose your fathers.*

4. How is the covenant said to be ordered? The word *ordered* sets out to us a marshalling, and fit laying of things together, in opposition to disorder and confusion. As we see in an army, every one is set in rank and file; so every thing in this covenant is so ranked, disposed, and ordered, that it stands at best advantage to receive and repel the enemy.

(1.) It is well ordered in respect of the root out of which it grew. This was the infinite wisdom and mercy of God. 1. It was founded in wisdom. The covenant of grace was a result of council; it was no rash act, but a deliberate act with infinite wisdom. God being the sovereign of all his creatures, and seeing mankind in a perishing condition, determined within himself deliberately to make such a covenant of peace. 2. It was founded in mercy; *i. e.* in the goodness of God flowing out to one in misery.

(2.) It is well ordered, in respect of the method. First, God begins; then we come on:—First, God on his part gives grace; and then we, on our parts, act faith and obedience. God hath ever the first work: as, first, *I will be your God, and then ye shall be my people:* first, *I will take away the stony heart, and give an heart of flesh;* and then *you shall loathe yourselves for your iniquities, and for your abominations:* first, *I will sprinkle*

water upon you, and then *ye shall be clean from all your filthiness:* first, *I will put my Spirit into you, and cause you to walk in my statutes:* and then *ye shall keep my judgments, and do them:* first, *I will pour out my Spirit of grace and supplication upon you,* and then *you shall mourn as a man mourneth for his only son:* first, *I will do all,* and then ye shall do something. A troubled spirit is apt to cry out, Alas! I can do nothing: I can as well dissolve a rock, as make my heart of stone a heart of flesh! Mark how the covenant stands well ordered like an army: *I will do all,* saith God, and then thou shalt do something: *I will strengthen and quicken you,* and then *ye shall serve me,* saith the Lord.

(3.) It is well ordered, in respect of the end and aim, to which all the parts of the covenant are referred. The end of the covenant is the praise of the glory of his grace: the parts of the covenant are the promise and the stipulation; the promise is either principal, and that is God and Christ; or secondary, and that is justification, sanctification, and glorification: and the stipulation on our parts are faith and obedience; we must believe in him that justifies the ungodly, and walk before him in all well-pleasing. Observe now the main design of the covenant, and see but how all the streams run towards that ocean: God gives himself to the praise of the glory of his grace. God gives Christ to the praise of the glory of his grace. God gives pardon, sanctification, and salvation, to the praise of the glory of his grace; and we believe, we obey, to the praise of the glory of his grace; and good reason, for all is of grace, and therefore all must tend to the praise of the glory of his grace. It is of grace that God hath given himself, Christ, pardon, sanctification, and salvation, to any soul. It is of grace that we believe; by grace ye are saved through faith, not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Oh! the sweet and comely order of this covenant! All is of grace, and all tends to the praise of the glory of his grace; and therefore it is called the covenant of grace. Many a soul is forced to cry, I cannot believe; I may as well reach heaven with a finger, as lay hold on Christ by the hand of faith: but mark how the covenant stands, like a well-marshalled army, to repel this doubt; if thou canst not believe, God will enable thee to believe. *To you it is given to believe.* God will not only promise good things, but helps us by his Spirit to perform the conditions. He works our hearts to believe in God, and to believe in Christ. All is of grace, that all may tend to the praise of the glory of his grace.

5. Wherein is the covenant sure? I answer, It is sure in the performance and accomplishment of it. Hence the promises of the covenant are called *the sure mercies of David;* not because they are sure unto David alone, but because they are sure unto all the seed of David, that are in covenant with God, as David

was. The promises of God's covenant are not *yea and nay*, various and uncertain; but they are *yea and amen*, sure to be fulfilled. Hence the stability of God's covenant is compared to the firmness and immoveableness of the mighty mountains; nay, *Mountains may depart, and the hills be removed, by a miracle; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed*, saith the Lord, *that hath mercy on thee.* Sooner shall the rocks be removed, the fire cease to burn, the sun be turned into darkness, and the very heavens be confounded with the earth, than the promise of God shall fail.

6. Christ is more clearly manifested in this breaking forth of the covenant, than in any of the former. For here we see,

(1.) That he was God and man, in one person; David's son, and yet David's Lord. *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right-hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*

(2.) That he suffered for us: and in his sufferings how many particulars are discovered! As, first, his cry, *My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?* Secondly, the Jews' taunts, *He trusted on the Lord, that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, if he delight in him.* Thirdly, the very manner of his death. *They pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones; they look and stare upon me: they part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.*

(3.) That he rose again for us. *Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.*

(4.) That he ascended up into heaven. *Thou hast ascended up on high; thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men.*

(5.) That he must be King over us, and over his enemies. *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right-hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.*

(6.) That he must be Priest, as well as King; and Sacrifice, as well as Priest. *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedech. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows:* (i. e. above all Christians, who are thy fellows, consorts, and partners, in the anointing:) *sacrifice and burnt-offering thou wouldst not have; but mine ear hast thou bored: burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, that I should do thy will, O God.* Mine ears hast thou bored, or digged open. The Septuagint, to make the sense plainer, say, *But a body hast thou fitted me, or prepared for me:* meaning, that his body was ordained and fitted to be a sacrifice for the sins of the world, when other legal sacrifices were received as

unprofitable. See how clearly Christ is revealed. It was never thus before.

And thus far of the covenant of promise, as it was manifested from David till the Captivity.

Sect. VI.—*Of the Covenant of Promise, as manifested to Israel about the time of the Captivity.*

The great breaking forth of this gracious covenant was to Israel about the time of their captivity. By reason of that captivity of Babylon, Israel was almost clean destroyed; and, therefore, then it was high time that the Lord should appear like a sun after a stormy rain, and give them some clearer light of Christ. He doth so, especially in these words: *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people; and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.* In this expression of the covenant, we shall examine these particulars:

1. Why it is called a new covenant?
2. Wherein the expression of this covenant doth excel the former, which God made with their fathers?
3. How doth God put the law into our inward parts?
4. What is it to have the law written in our hearts?
5. How are we taught of God, so as not to need (comparatively) any other kind of teaching?
6. What is the universality of this knowledge, in that *all shall know me, saith the Lord?*

1. Why is it called a new covenant? I answer, it is called new, in contradiction to the covenant of promise before Christ came. The very same words are repeated in the Epistle to the Hebrews: *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah. In that he saith a new covenant, he hath made the first old; now that which decayeth, and waxeth old, is ready to vanish away.* The new covenant is usually understood in the latter sense: it is new, because diverse from that which God made with the fathers before Christ; it hath a new worship,

new adoration, a new form of the church, new witnesses, new tables, new ordinances: and these never to be disannulled, never to wax old, as the apostle speaks.

2. Wherein doth this covenant excel the former, which God made with their fathers? I answer,—

(1.) It excels in the benefits and graces of the Spirit. We find, that under this covenant they were more plentifully bestowed upon the church than formerly.

(2.) It excels in the discovery of the Mediator, in and through whom this covenant was made. In the former expression we discovered much, yet in none of them was so plainly revealed the time of his coming, the place of his birth, his name, the passages of his nativity, his humiliation and kingdom, as we find in this.—

[1.] Concerning the time of his coming.—'Seventy weeks shall be determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy.'

[2.] Concerning the place of his birth.—'But thou Bethlehem Ephrata, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.'

[3.] Concerning his name.—'Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace.—In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.—Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and thou, O virgin, shalt call his name Immanuel.'

[4.] Concerning the passages of his nativity.—That he should be born of a virgin, *Isa.* vii. 14. That at his birth all the infants round about Bethlehem should be slain, *Jer.* xxxi. 15. That John the Baptist should be his forerunner, to prepare his way, *Mal.* iii. 1. That he should flee into Egypt, and be recalled thence again, *Hos.* xi. 1. I might add many particulars of this kind.

[5.] Concerning his humiliation.—'Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted: but he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.—He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth.—He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who shall declare his gene-

ration? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.—It pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief.—Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death, and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.' One would think this were rather a history than a prophecy of Christ's sufferings.

[6.] Concerning his kingdom.—'Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem, behold thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.'' Behold a King, behold thy King; behold thy King cometh, and he cometh unto thee.—1. He is a King, and therefore able. 2. He is thy King, and therefore willing. Wonderful love, that he would come! but more wonderful was the manner of his coming: he that before made man a soul after the image of God, then made himself a body after the image of man. And thus we see how this covenant excels the former in every of these respects.

3. How doth God put the law in our inward parts? I answer, God puts the law into our inward parts, by enlivening a man with the graces of his holy Spirit, suitable to his commandment. First, There is the law of God without us, as we see it or read it in scriptures; but when it is put within us, then God hath wrought an inward disposition in our minds, that answers to that law without us: For example; This is the law without, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength.* To answer which there is a promise, *I will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.* Now, when this promise is fulfilled, when God hath put love in our hearts, then is the law put into our inward parts.

4. What is it to have the law written in our hearts? This writing contains the former, and is something more. It is said to be written, that there might be something within answerable to the law without; it was written without, and so it was written within. This writing is the very same with copying or transcribing. The writing within is every way answerable to the writing without. Oh! what a mercy is this, that the same God who writ the law with his own finger in the tables of stone, should also write the same law with the finger of his Spirit in the tables of our hearts! As you see in a seal, when you have put the seal on the wax, and you take it off again, you find on the wax the same impression that was on the seal: so it is in the hearts of the faithful; when the Spirit hath once softened them, then he writes the law, *i. e.* he stamps an inward aptness, and

and inward disposition, on the heart, answering to every particular of the law.

5. How are we taught of God, so as not to need comparatively any other kind of teaching? I answer—

(1.) God teacheth inwardly.—*In the hidden part thou hast made me to know wisdom*, saith David: and again, *I thank the Lord that gave me counsel, my reins also instruct me in the night season.* The reins are the most inward part of the body, and the night-season the most private time: both express the intimacy of Divine teaching. *God, who commanded light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts.* Man's light may shine into the head, but God's light alone doth shine into the heart.

(1.) God teacheth clearly. Elihu offering himself instead of God to reason with Job, he tells him, *My words shall be of the uprightness of my heart, and my lips shall utter knowledge clearly.* If ever the word come home to an heart, it comes with a convincing clearness. So the apostle, *Our gospel came unto you, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much full assurance.* The word hath a treble emphasis—assurance, full assurance, and much full assurance: Here is clear work.

(3.) God teacheth sweetly and comfortably.—*Thou hast taught me*, saith David; and then it follows, *how sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth.* Luther said, "He would not live in paradise, if he must live without the word; but with the word," said he, "I could live in hell." When Christ put his hand in by the hole of the door to teach the heart, her bowels were moved, and then her fingers dropt upon the handles of the lock sweet-smelling myrrh, *Cant.* v. 5. The teachings of Christ left such a blessing upon the first motions of the spouse's heart, that with the very touch of them she is refreshed; her fingers drop myrrh, and her bowels are moved, as the monuments of his gracious teachings.

Christians, these are the teachings of God! and in reference to this, we shall no more teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord. God's teaching is another kind of teaching than we can have from the hands of men; there is no man in the world can teach us: and therefore, they whom God teacheth, need not any other kind of teaching, respectively or comparatively.

6. What is the universality of this knowledge?—*They shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord.* The meaning is, that all that are in the covenant of grace shall be so taught of God, that they shall every one know God inwardly, clearly, experimentally, sweetly, and savingly.

I have now propounded the object we are to look unto; that is, Jesus, as held forth in a way of promise or covenant; in that

dark time, from the creation till his first coming in the flesh: our next business is to direct you in the mystery of grace, how you are to look to him in this respect.

CHAP. II.

SECT. I.—*Of Knowing Jesus, as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation from the Creation until his First Coming.*

LOOKING comprehends knowing, considering, desiring, hoping, believing, loving, joying, calling on, conforming to, as you have heard; and accordingly, that we may practise, 1. We must know Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation in the beginning, and from the beginning, of the world. Come, let us learn what he did for us in the morning of this world: he made it for us, and he made us more especially for his own glory; but presently after we were made, we sinned and marred the image wherein God made us. This was the saddest act that ever was; it was the undoing of man, and, without the mercy of God, the damning of all souls to all eternity. And, O my soul, know this for thyself, thou wast in the loins of Adam at that same time, so that what he did, thou didst; thou wast partaker of his sins, and thou wast to partake with him in his punishment: but well mayest thou say, Blessed be God for Jesus Christ! at the very instant when all should have been damned, Christ intervened; a covenant of grace is made with man, and Christ is the foundation, in and through whom we must be reconciled unto God. Come, soul, and study this covenant of grace in reference to thyself. Had not this been, where hadst thou been, nay, where had all the world been, at this day? Surely it concerns thee to take notice of this great transaction. After man had fallen by sin, Christ is promised; and that all the saints might partake of Christ, a covenant of grace is entered: this, at the beginning of the world, was more dim; but the nearer to Christ's coming in the flesh, the more clearly it appeared. Howsoever, dimly or clearly, thus it pleased God in Christ to carry on the great work of our salvation at that time; viz. by a promise of Christ, and by a covenant in Christ. And for thy better knowledge of it, study the promise made to Adam, Abraham, Moses, David, and Israel. Study these several breakings out of the covenant of grace. It is worth thy pains; it is a mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to the saints. Here lies the firm foundation of a Christian's comfort; if thou canst but assure thyself of thy part in this, thou art blessed for ever. Oh! how satisfying is it to know the faithful engagements of the Almighty God through that Son of his love, in a covenant of grace!

SECT. II.—*Of Considering Jesus in that respect.*

WE must consider Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation in that dark time. It is not enough to study it and know it, but we must seriously meditate, ponder, and consider of it, till we bring it to some profitable issue. This is the consideration I mean, when we hold our thoughts to this or that spiritual subject, till we perceive success, and the work prosper in our hands. Now, to help us in this,—

1. Consider Jesus in the first promise made to man. *It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.* When all men were under the guilt of sin, and in the power of Satan, and when thou, my soul, wert in as bad a case as any other; then to hear the sound of these glad tidings, then to hear of Jesus, a Saviour and Redeemer, sure this was welcome news. Come, draw the case nearer to thyself: thou wast in Adam's loins; suppose thou hadst been in Adam's stead; suppose thou hadst heard the voice of the Lord walking in the garden, suppose thou hadst heard him call, *Adam, where art thou?* Peter, Andrew, Thomas, where art thou? What! hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? Appear, and come to judgment; the law is irrevocable, *In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.* There is nothing to be looked for but death temporal, death spiritual, and death eternal. Oh! what a fearful condition is this, no sooner to come into the world, but presently to be turned over into hell! for one day to be a monarch of the world, and the very next to be a slave of Satan, and bound hand and foot in a darksome dungeon! for a few hours to live in Eden, to enjoy every tree in the garden, pleasant to the sight, and good for food, and then to enter into the confines of eternity, and ever to be tormented with the devil and his angels! It is no wonder if Adam hid himself from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. O my soul, in that case thou wouldst have cried to the rocks and to the mountains, Fall on me, and hide me from the face of him that sitteth on the throne. If God be angry, who may abide it? When the great day of his wrath is come, who shall be able to stand? And yet despair not, O my soul; for in the midst of wrath God is pleased to remember mercy. Even now, when all the world should have been damned, Jesus is proclaimed and promised; and he it is that must die, according to the commination, for he is our surety, and he it is that by death must overcome death and the devil. *It shall bruise thy head,* saith God to Satan; as if he had said, Come, Satan, thou hast taken captive ten thousands of souls: Adam and Eve are now ensnared, and in their loins all the men and women that ever shall be: now is thy day of triumph, but thou shalt not carry it thus. Out of the seed of the woman shall spring a branch, *and he shall bruise thy head;* he shall break thy power, he shall

tread thy dominion under foot, he shall lead thy captivity captive, he shall take away sin, he shall point out to men and angels the glory of heaven, and a new world of free grace. In this promise, O my soul, is wrapped up thy hope, thy heaven, thy salvation; and therefore consider it, look on all sides of it, view it over and over; it is a field that contains in the bowels of it a precious treasure; there is in it a Saviour, a Redeemer, a Deliverer from sin, death, and hell.

2. Consider Jesus in that promise made to Abraham: *I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee.* In respect of this covenant, Abraham is called the father of the faithful: and they which are of the faith, are called the children of Abraham. And, O my soul! thou dost by faith draw it through Abraham, to whom this promise was made; for if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Consider what a mercy this is, that God should enter into a covenant with thee in the loins of Abraham. God made a promise of Christ, and inclusively a covenant of grace, in his comforting Adam; but he makes a covenant expressly under the name of covenant, with Abraham and his seed. Be amazed! What! that the great and glorious God of heaven and earth should make himself a debtor to us! O my soul, think of it seriously: He is in heaven, and thou art on earth; he is the Creator, and thou art his creature. Ah! what art thou, or what is thy father's house, that thou shouldest be raised up hitherto! The very covenant is a wonder, as it relates to God and us. What is it but a compact, a binding of God and us. When Jehosaphat and Ahab were in covenant, see how Jehosaphat expresseth himself, *I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses;* so it is betwixt God and us. If once he gives us the covenant, then his strength is our strength, his power is our power, his armies are our armies, his attributes are our attributes, we have interest in all. There is an offensive and defensive league, as I may say, betwixt God and us; and if we put him in mind of it in all our straits, he cannot deny us. Thus runs the tenor of his covenant: *I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee.* This is the general promise; I may call it the mother-promise, that carries all other promises in its womb. Consider, that it is God in Christ that is propounded to us in this phrase, *I will be a God to thee.* Here is the greatest promise that ever was made. Christ, God, is more than grace, pardon, holiness, heaven; as the husband is more excellent than the marriage-robe, bracelets, rings. The well and fountain of life is of more excellency than the streams. Christ Jesus is far above a created beatitude which issueth from him. O my soul, is not this worthy of thy inmost consideration?

3. Consider Jesus in that promise made to Moses and the Israelites, *I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.* Much hath been said to this promise; but to contradict it, consider in the promise the sufficiency and propriety. First, here is sufficiency. It is a promise of infinite worth, an hid treasure, a rich possession, an overflowing blessing, which none can rightly value; it is no less than the great and mighty, and infinite God. If we had a promise of a hundred worlds, or of ten heavens, this is more than all: heaven indeed is beautiful, but God is more beautiful; for he is the God of heaven: and hence it is that the saints in heaven are not satisfied without their God. It is a sweet expression of Bernard, "As whatsoever we give unto thee, Lord, unless we give ourselves, cannot satisfy thee; so whatsoever thou givest unto us, Lord, unless thou givest thyself, it cannot satisfy us." And hence it is, that as God doth make the saints his portion, so God is the portion and inheritance of his saints. Consider the greatness, the goodness, the all-sufficiency of this promise, *I am the Lord thy God!* No question but Moses had many other rich promises from God, but he could not be satisfied without God himself: *If thy presence be not with us, bring us not hence.* And no wonder; for without God all things are nothing; but in the want of all other things, God himself is instead of all: it is God's sole prerogative to be an universal good. The things of this world can but help in this or that particular thing; as bread against hunger, drink against thirst, clothes against cold and nakedness, house against wind and weather, riches against poverty, physic against sickness; but God is an all-sufficient good: he is all in all both to the inner and outward man. Are we guilty of sin? there is mercy in God to pardon us. Are we full of infirmities? there is grace in God to heal us. Are we strong in corruptions? there is power in God to subdue them in us. Are we disquieted in conscience? there is that Spirit in God, that is the Comforter, that can fill us with joy unspeakable and glorious. And for our outward man, all our welfare is laid up in God: *He is the God of our life,* Psal. xlii. 1. *He is the strength of our life,* Psal. xxvii. 1. *He is a quickening Spirit,* 1 Cor. xv. 45. Which though it be in regard of the inner man, yet there it is spoken of the outward man, which the Lord shall quicken after death, and doth now keep alive by his mighty power; for *in him we live, and move, and have our being.*

O my soul, that thou wouldst but meditate and consider this promise in all thy wants. When means fail, and the streams run no more, Oh! that thou wouldest then go to the fountain, where the waters run sweeter, and more sure! For as Joseph said to Pharaoh,—*It is not in me, God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace:* so may silver and gold, and such things, say to thee,

It is not in us; God shall give enough out of himself. Have God, and have all: want God, and there is no content in the enjoyment of all. It was the apostle's case; *as having nothing, yet possessing all things.* Surely he lived to God, and enjoyed God, and he was an all-sufficient good unto him. God may be enjoyed in any condition; in the meanest, as well as the greatest; in the poorest, as well as the richest. God will go into a wilderness, into a prison, with his people, and there he will make up all that they are cut short of. Thy discontents therefore arise not from want of inward means, but from want of inward fellowship with God: and if thou dost not find a sufficiency, it is because thou dost not enjoy him, who is thy all-sufficient good. Oh! stir up faith, and consider the covenant; think seriously on this promise—*I am God all-sufficient; I am the Lord thy God.*

Here is the propriety of saints—*the Lord thy God.* What is this, that God is thy God? Heaven and earth, angels and men, may stand astonished at it. What! that the great and mighty God, God almighty, and God all-sufficient, should be called thy God! It is observable what the apostle speaks, *God is not ashamed to be called their God.* Would not a prince be ashamed to take a beggar, a base and adulterous woman, to be his wife? But we are worse than so, and God is better than so; sin hath made us worse than the worst of women; and God is better, holier, higher, than the best of princes; and yet God is not ashamed to own us, nor ashamed that we own him as our own—*I am thy God.* It is as if the Lord should say, Use me, and all my power, grace, mercy, kindness, as thine own. Go through all my attributes; consider my almighty power, consider my wisdom, understanding, goodness, truth, faithfulness; consider my patience, long-suffering, forbearance, all these are thine: as thus,—my power is thine, to work all thy works for thee, and in thee, to make a passage for thee in all thy straits, to deliver thee out of six troubles, and out of seven: my wisdom is thine, to counsel thee in any difficult cases, to instruct thee in things that be obscure, to reveal to thee the mysteries of grace, and the wonderful things contained in my law: my justice is thine, to deliver thee when thou art oppressed, to defend thee in thy innocence, and to vindicate thee from the injuries of men. What needs more? O my soul, think of these, and all other God's attributes; say in thyself, All these are mine: nay more; think of God in Christ, (for otherwise what hast thou to do with God in a covenant of grace?) and say in thy heart, Jesus Christ is mine, my Saviour, my Redeemer, my Head, my elder Brother. His doings are mine, and his sufferings are mine; his life and death, his resurrection and ascension, his session and intercession, all are mine: nay more; If Christ be mine, why then all good things are mine in Christ; I say, in Christ, for they come not

immediately, but through the hands of a Redeemer; and though he be a man who redeemed us, yet because he is God as well as man, there is more of God, and heaven, and free-love, in all our good things, than if we received them immediately from God. Ravens have their food, and devils have their being, from God by creature-right; but we have all we have, from God in Christ, by covenant-right. This, surely this very promise, is the principal promise of the covenant; it is the very substance, soul, and life of all. Oh then! how careful shouldst thou be to improve the strength of thy mind, thoughts, and affections, on this only subject!

4. Consider Jesus in that promise made to David, *He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure.*

(1.) An everlasting covenant.—Christ hath built and prepared a kingdom, that shall never fade; a spiritual and a heavenly kingdom, which shall never cease. And as he hath prepared it, so if thou believest, he hath entered into a covenant with thy soul to bestow it on thee; it is an everlasting covenant, and he will give thee everlasting life.

(2.) It is ordered in all things.—The covenant of grace is so marshalled and ordered, that it stands at best advantage to receive and repel all thy objections. Many an objection hast thou raised: how often have such thoughts been in thee; Oh! I am miserable, I shall not live, but die; my sins will damn me; I am lost for ever! And again, If God hath made with me a covenant, why then I have something to do on my part; (for this is the nature of the covenant, to bind on both parts;) but, alas! I have failed, I can do nothing; I can as well dissolve a rock, as make my heart of stone a heart of flesh; I can as well reach heaven with a finger, as lay hold on Christ by the hand of faith! Have not such arguings as these been many a time in thy heart? Consider how the covenant is ordered in respect of the author of it, of the person's interest in it, of the parts of which it consists, and of the end and aim to which it refers: and in some of these, if not in all of these, thou wilt find thy objections answered.

(3.) It is sure.—God is not fast and loose in his covenant. Heaven and earth shall pass away, before one jot or tittle of his word shall fail. Consider, O my soul, he both can and will perform his word: his power, his love, his faithfulness, all stand engaged. What sweet matter is here for a soul to dwell upon! What needs it go out to other objects, whilst it may find enough here? but especially, what needs it to bestow itself upon vain things? Oh! that so much precious sand of our thoughts should run out after sin, and so little after grace, or after this covenant of grace!

5. Consider Jesus in that promise which God made with Israel and Judah: *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neigh-*

hour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more. Oh, what an error is it, that there is no inherent righteousness in the saints, but only in Christ! Is not this the ordinary scripture-phrase—*I will put my Spirit within you:* and, *the water that I shall give you, shall be in you a well of water springing up into everlasting life:* and, *the anointing which you have received of him, abideth in you:* and, *Christ in you the hope of glory.* Observe how the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels; so that when the spirit went, they went; and when the spirit was lifted up, they were lifted up: even so is the Spirit of Christ, acting, guiding, framing, and disposing them to move and walk according to his laws: *The kingdom of heaven is within you,* saith Christ. *And I delight to do thy will, O God,* saith David, *yea, thy law is within my heart.* O my soul, if thou art in covenant with God, besides the indwelling of the Spirit, there is a spiritual principle of grace, which Christ by his Spirit hath put into thy heart, enabling thee to move thyself towards God. Oh! consider this inward principle; it is an excellent subject, worthy of thy consideration!

(1.) I will be their God, and they shall be my people.—Consider God essentially, and personally—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; God in himself, and God in his creatures. This very promise turns over heaven, earth, sea, land, bread, clothes, sleep, the world, life and death, into free grace. No wonder if God set this promise in the midst of the covenant, as the heart in the midst of the body, to communicate life to all the rest. This promise hath an influence into all other promises; it is the great promise of the new covenant; it is as great as God is: though the heavens, and heaven of heavens, be not able to contain him, yet this promise contains him; God shuts up himself, as it were, in it: *I will be their God.*

(2.) They shall be my people,—*i. e.* they shall be to me a peculiar people, *Tit.* ii. 14. The word hath this emphasis in it, that God looks upon all other things as accidents in comparison, and his substance is his people; they are his very portion: *for the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.* They are his treasure, his peculiar treasure, above all people. *If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then shall ye be a peculiar treasure unto me, and above all people: for all the earth is mine.* Observe, O my soul, all the earth is mine, that is, all people is my people; but I have a special interest in my covenanted people, they only are my portion, my peculiar treasure. The saints are those that God hath set his heart upon; they are children of the high God; they are the spouse that are married to the lamb; they are nearer God in some respects than the very angels themselves, for the angels are not in a mystical

union so married to Christ as God's people are. Oh, the happiness of saints! *I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

(3.) They shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least to the greatest, saith the Lord.—Consider this, O poor soul! Thou complainest of thy weakness, thou knowest little or nothing: why, see here a glorious promise; if thou art but in covenant with God, thou shall be taught of God, and then thou shalt know God far more clearly than the Jews of old; he will open to thee all his treasures of wisdom and knowledge; he will bestow on thee a greater measure of his Spirit, so that *out of thy belly shall flow rivers of living water.* We say, a good tutor may teach more in a day than another in a month. Now the promise runs thus, that all thy children shall be taught of God. Not that private instruction, or public ministry, must be excluded, we know these are appointed under the new testament, and are subordinate to the Spirit's teaching; but that the teachings of God far surpass the teachings of men, and therefore the knowledge of God under the new testament shall far surpass that under the old. Herein appears the excellency of Christ's prophetical office,—he is such a prophet as enlightens every man within that comes into the world; he is such a prophet as baptizes with the Holy Ghost, and with fire; he is such a prophet as makes men's hearts to burn within them when he speaks unto them; he is such a prophet as bids his ministers, *Go, teach all nations, and I will be with you; and I will make you able ministers, not of the letter, but of the Spirit;*—he is such a prophet as teacheth inwardly, clearly, experimentally, and sweetly: no man in the world can say this, or do this, but Jesus Christ, the great prophet of the church, whom God hath raised up, like unto Moses, yet far above Moses. O my soul, consider if thou art thus taught of God!

(4.) I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more.—Consider of this! *Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.* Consider, O my soul; suppose thy condition thus: As thou livest under the laws of men, so for the transgression of those laws thou art called to account: the judge weighs, and gives just judgment, he dooms thee to the axe, or rack, or wheel; and because of the aggravation of thy crime, he commands thee to be tortured leisurely, that bones, sinews, joints, might be pained for twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years; that so much of thy flesh should be cut off every day; that such and such a bone should be broken, such and such a day; and that by art the flesh should be restored, and the bone cured again, that for so many years thou mightest be kept every day dying, and yet never die; that all this while thou must have no sleep, nor ease, nor food, nor

clothing: that whips of iron, scourges of scorpions, that racks, wheels, caldrons full of melted lead, should be prepared, instruments of thy continual torments: in this case, suppose a mighty prince, by an act of free and special grace, should deliver thee from this pain and torture, and not only so, but should give thee a life in perfect health, should put thee into a paradise of pleasures, where all the honour, love, and service, of a world of men and angels, should await thee, and where thou shouldst be elevated to the top of all imaginable happiness, above Solomon in the highest royalty, or Adam in his first innocence; were not this mercy? Wouldst thou not think it the highest act of grace and love that any creature could extend to his fellow-creature? And yet all this is nothing but a shadow of grace, in comparison of the love and rich grace of God in the justification of a sinner. If thou hast a right to this promise. *I will forgive thy iniquity, and remember thy sin no more,* thou art delivered from eternal death, and thou art entitled to an eternal kingdom. Oh! know thy blessedness aright; consider how infinitely thou art engaged to God, and Christ, and mercy, and free-grace! This promise sounds forth nothing but grace and blessing; grace from God, and blessing on us: it is grace, because nothing but grace and mercy can forgive; it is grace, because God, if he will, hath power in his hand to revenge; he doth not pass by sin as men do offences, when they dissemble forgiveness; they may forgive, because they have not power to avenge: it is otherwise with God—*To me belongs vengeance,* saith God: he is able to destroy, and yet he chuseth to forgive. This is his name,—strong, and gracious.

O my soul, thou art apt to say, Will the Lord forgive my sins? what reason hath God to look on me, to pardon me, to pluck me as a firebrand out of the fire of hell? why should God forgive me? But now consider, if thy heart be humbled, the Lord will do it.

(1.) Because he delighteth in mercy: it is a pleasure to God to forgive sins. Never did we take more pleasure, nor so much pleasure, in committing sin, as he doth in pardoning sin. He is the Father of mercies; he delights in mercy, as a father in his children; it doth him good to see the fruits of his own mercy, in taking away the sins of his own people.

(2.) Because it is his nature and inclination to pardon sin. This appears,

[1.] In the proclaiming of his name: *The Lord, the Lord, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin.*

[2.] In his gracious invitations: *Come unto me,* saith Christ: if sin burden you, I will ease you.

[3.] In his patience, and waiting for repentance. He waits

to this very end, that he might be gracious, and that he may have mercy.

[4.] Because it is his promise to pardon sin: *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins.* This promise of pardon is one of the great blessings of the covenant of grace. You hear the words, *I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more.*

Now come, consider, O my soul, of every particular in this gracious covenant, and be serious in thy consideration! Surely there is too much expense in thy spirit upon vain, and transitory, and worldly things. Alas! thou hast but a short time to live; and the strength of thy mind is the most precious thing thou hast. O then let thy inmost thoughts and deep affections be acted and exercised on this subject. If God and Jesus, and all thy good, be included here, why should not thy whole soul be intent on this? why shouldst thou spend it on the creature? why shouldst thou be so subject to carnal griefs and fears? Surely all these are fitter to be fixed on God in Christ, on Jesus in a covenant of grace.

Sect. III.—*Of Desiring Jesus in that respect.*

We must desire Jesus, carrying on the great work of man's salvation before his coming in the flesh. It is not enough to know and consider, but we must desire. This is the order of God's work: no sooner hath his Spirit clearly revealed the goodness of the promise that we come to know, but the soul considers of it, views it in all its excellencies, weighs it in the balance of its best and deepest meditation. This done, the affections begin to stir, and the soul begins thus to reason: 'Oh! happy I, that I see the goodness of this gracious promise; but miserable I, if I come to see this, and never have a share in it! O! why not I, Lord? why not my sins pardoned? why not my corruptions subdued? why not the law written in my heart, and put into my inward parts? why may not I say, *My Lord, my God!* Or, *I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine?* Why not this covenant established between God and me? Now, my soul thirsts after this as a thirsty land, my affections hunger after Jesus. Oh! I would fain be in covenant with God; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire! 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

Come then, my soul, and whet thy desires in every one of these respects: as, 1. desire thy interest in the covenant: 2. desire thy improvement of the covenant: 3. desire the continuance of thy covenant state: 4. desire Jesus, the great business, or the all in all, in a covenant of grace.

1. Desire thy interest in the covenant. Say in thyself: 'Is the world willing to receive me to his grace? Was that his voice in the streets, *How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity?*

Turn ye at my reproof, behold, I will pour out my Spirit upon you. Was that his proclamation, *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters,—incline your ear and to come unto me,—and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David?* And are these the promises offered in the covenant, *I will put my law into their inward parts, and I will write it in your hearts; and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people?* Oh, the blessed condition of those people that are in covenant with God! *Blessed art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee a people saved of the Lord!* Happy is the people that are in such a case, yea, *happy is that people whose God is the Lord.*—But ah, what can I say! No sin like unto my sin, no misery like unto my misery. Alas, I die for hunger, whilst those that are in my Father's house have bread enough. Oh, that I were in their condition! Never did David long more for the waters of the well of Bethlehem, than my soul, now touched with the sense of sin, doth desire to be at peace with God, and in covenant with him. Oh! I thirst, I pant, I gasp after him, I long for communion and peace with him; *with my soul do I desire thee in the night, yea, with my spirit within me do I seek thee early.*'

2. Desire the improvement of the covenant: It may be, God hath given thee an interest in it; but, alas! thy hold is so weak that thou scarce knowest the meaning of it; the Lord may answer, but yet he speaks darkly, as some time he spake to the woman, *Go thy way, and sin no more.* It is a middle kind of expression, neither assuring her that her sin was pardoned, nor yet putting her out of hope that it might be pardoned. So it may be, God hath given thee some little ease, but he hath not spoken full peace. Go on then, and desire more confirmation; say in thine heart, 'O Lord, thou hast begun to shew grace unto thy servant; but oh! manifest to me all thy goodness: thou hast given me a drop, and I feel it so sweet that now I thirst, and long to enjoy the fountain: thou hast given me a taste, but my desire is not thereby diminished, but enlarged; and good reason, for what are these drops, and tastes, but only the first-fruits and earnests of the Spirit. Oh! then, what are those harvests of joy? What are those treasures of wisdom and free grace hid in God? I have indeed beheld *a feast of fat things, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees, of wines on the lees well refined:* but oh! what a famine is yet in my spirit!—*O Lord, I have longed for thy salvation. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!*'

3. Desire after continuance of the covenant-state. Many a soul cannot deny but that the Lord hath shewed mercy on him, but he fears that he shall not hold out. He feels within such a power of corruption, such strong temptations, that now he doubts, O what will become of my poor soul? what will be the issue of this? Come now, and desire perseverance. When

Peter was ravished on the mount, *It is good being here,* says he, *let us build three tabernacles:* his desire was to have continued there for ever. O come with these pantings and breathings after God; put forth thy desires in these or the like expressions: 'O Lord, thou hast said, I will betroth thee unto me for ever: then, Lord, I desire the accomplishment. O fulfil what thou hast said! It would break my heart if ever the covenant should be broken betwixt me and thee. My desire is towards thee; and the more I enjoy thee, the more I desire and pant after thee. My desires are like thyself, infinite, eternal, everlasting desires.

4. Desire Jesus, the great business, or the all in all, in a covenant of grace. The most proper object of desire, especially to fallen man, is Jesus Christ. Hence it is that a poor sinner, under the sense of sin, cries out with the vehemency of desire, 'Christ and none but Christ; give me Christ, or I die, I am undone, I am lost for ever.' But what is Christ, or Jesus, to a covenant of grace? I answer, he is the great business, he is the all in all.

(1.) Christ is the messenger of this covenant: *The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in.* Christ travels with tidings between parties of the covenant:

[1.] He reports of God to us, he commends his Father unto us. Ministers cannot speak of Christ, and of his Father, as he can do himself. O my soul, to excite thy desires, come and hear Christ speak of Christ, and of his Father, and of heaven; for he saw all.

[2.] He reports of us to God; he commends us to his Father. *O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.* Happy souls, of whom Christ is telling good tidings in heaven; for he is the Angel of the covenant.

(2.) He is the witness of the covenant; he saw and heard all. *Behold I have given him for a witness to the people;* and he is called, *The faithful Witness; the Amen; the faithful and true Witness.* The covenant saith, *The Son of man came to seek and save that which was lost: Amen;* saith Christ, *I can witness that to be true.* The covenant saith, *Christ died, and rose again for sinners: Amen,* saith Christ, *I was dead, and behold I live for ever more, Amen.* There is not any thing said in the covenant, but Christ is a witness to it; and therefore we read in the very end of the Bible, this subscription, as I may call it, in relation to Christ, *He which testifieth of these things saith: Surely I come quickly; Amen.*

(3.) Christ is the surety of the covenant. *Inasmuch as not without an oath he was made a priest, by so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.* The covenant of works had a promise; but because it was to be broken, and done away, it

had no oath of God, as this hath. O doubting soul, thou that sayest thy salvation is not sure, think on this scripture; thou hast the oath of God for it; it is a sworn article of the covenant, *Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved.* And to this end Christ is a surety.

[1.] Surety for God: he undertakes that God shall fulfil his part of the covenant; *Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. And him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.*

[2.] Surety for us: and to this purpose he hath paid a ransom for us, and giveth a new heart to us.

(4.) Christ is the mediator of the covenant. The apostle calls him, *Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant.* He hath something of God, as being true God, and something of man, as sharing with us of the nature of man: hence he is mediator by office, and layeth his hands on both parties, as a days-man doth; and in this respect he is a friend, a reconciler, and a servant. 1. A friend to both parties: he hath God's heart for man, to be gracious; and he hath man's heart for God, to satisfy justice. 2. A reconciler of both parties: he brings down God to a treaty of peace, and he brings up man by a ransom paid; so that he may say unto both, 'Father, come down to my brethren, my kindred and flesh; and, thou my sister and spouse, come up to my Father, and thy Father, to my God and thy God.' 3. He is a servant to both parties: *Behold my servant,* saith God, *my righteous servant:* yea, and our servant. *He came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.*

(5.) Christ is the testator of the covenant. He died to this very end, that he might confirm the covenant. *Where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator: for a testament is of force after men are dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all whilst the testator liveth.* Christ then must die, and Christ's blood must be shed, to seal the covenant of grace. It is not every blood, but Christ's blood, that must seal the everlasting covenant, Heb. xiii. 20, and his blood being shed, he is then rightly called the testator of the covenant.

O what fuel is here to set our desires on flame! Come, soul, and bend thy desires towards Christ, as the sunflower towards the sun, the iron to the loadstone; yea, the nearer thou drawest towards Christ, the more do thou desire Christ. "He that thirsts, let him thirst more," saith Bernard, "and he that desires, let him desire yet more abundantly." Is there not cause? O what excellencies hast thou found in Christ! Poor soul! thou hast undone thyself by sin, there's but a step betwixt thee and damnation; but, to save thy soul, Christ comes leaping on the mountains, and skipping on the hills: he enters into a covenant with God; he is the messenger of the covenant, the witness of the covenant, the surety of the covenant, the mediator of the cove-

nant, the testator of the covenant, the great business, the all in all. If David could say, *My soul breaks for the longing that it hath to thy judgments at all times;* how mayest thou say, 'My soul breaks for the longings that it hath to thy mercies, (and my Jesus,) at all times.' Oh! I gasp for grace, as the thirsty land for drops of rain. I thirst, I faint, I languish, I long for, an hearty draught of the fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Oh! that I could see Jesus flying through the midst of heaven, with the covenant in his hand. Oh! I long for that angel of the covenant; I long to see such another vision as John did, when he said, *And I saw another angel in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell upon the earth.* What! is that covenant in the hand of Christ? And is my name written in that roll? Say, Lord, is my name written on the heart of Christ? Oh! if I had the glory of all the world; if I had ten thousand worlds, and ten thousand lives; I would lay them all down, to have this poor trembling soul of mine assured of this. Oh! my thirst is insatiable, my bowels are hot within me; my desire after Jesus is greedy as the grave, the coals thereof are as coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.

Sect. IV.—*Of Hoping in Jesus in that respect.*

Hope is a certain confidence that the desired good will come. All the question is, whether those promises contained in the covenant of grace belong unto me? and what are the grounds on which my hope is built? If the grounds be weak, then hope is doubtful, or presumptuous; but if the grounds be right, then hope is right, and I may cast anchor, and build upon it.

In the disquisition of these grounds, we shall only search into those qualifications which the scripture tells us they are qualified with, with whom the Lord enters into a covenant of grace: and these we shall reduce—1. To the condition of the covenant. 2. To the promise of the covenant.

1. If thou art in a covenant with God, then hath God wrought in thee that condition of the covenant, a true and lively faith. Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved. The promise of life contained in the covenant is made only to believers. This is so sure a way of trial, that the apostle himself directs us thereunto: *Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith.* But how shall I examine? Why, thus:

(1.) True faith will carry thee out of thyself unto Christ: *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.* A faithful man hath not his life in himself, but in Christ Jesus; he hath his spiritual being in the Father, and in his Son Jesus Christ; he is joined to the Lord, and is one spirit; he seeth the Father in the Son,

and the Son within himself, and also the Father within himself through the Son. *Know ye not that Christ Jesus is in you, except ye be reprobates? Ye shall know me,* saith Christ, *that I am in the Father, and you in me, and I in you.*

(2.) True faith will carry thee beyond the world. A believer looks on Christ overcoming the world through him:—this is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith.

(3.) True faith is ever accompanied with true love. If once by faith thou apprehendest Christ's love to thee, thou canst not but love Christ, who loved thee, and gave himself for thee:—We love him, because he first loved us.

(4.) True faith purifies the heart, and purgeth out sin. When God discovers this, that he will heal backsliding, and love freely, and turn away his anger, then Ephraim shall say, *What have I any more to do with idols?* If ever Christ reveal himself as the justification, he will be sure to present himself as the pattern of our sanctification. The knowledge of God's goodness will make us in love with holiness.

(5.) Above all, observe the rise. True faith is ever bottomed upon the sense and pain of a lost condition. This is faith's method—be condemned, to be saved; be sick, and be healed. Faith is a flower of Christ's own planting, but it grows in no soul, but only on the margin of the lake of fire and brimstone; in regard there's none so fit for Christ and heaven, as those who are self-sick, and self-condemned to hell. They that be whole, need not a physician, saith Christ, but they that are sick. I know Satan argues thus: Thou art not worthy of Christ, and therefore what hast thou to do with Christ? But faith concludes otherwise: I am not worthy of Christ, I am out of measure sinful, I tremble at it, and I am sensible of it, and therefore ought I, and therefore must I, come to Christ? This arguing is gospel-logic, and the right method of a true and saving faith; for what is faith, but the act of a sinner humbled, weary, laden, poor, and self-condemned? Oh! take heed of their doctrine, who make faith the act of some vile person never humbled, but applying, with an immediate touch, his hot, boiling, and smoking lusts, to the bleeding, blessed wounds and death of Jesus Christ!

2. If thou art in covenant with God, then hath God fulfilled in some part the promises of this covenant to thy soul.

(1.) Then hath God put the law into thy inward parts, and writ it in thy heart. Look, as face in the glass answers face, so does the conformity of thy heart to the law of God: thou obeyest God's will, and delightest in that obedience; thou sayest with David, *I delight to do thy will, O God; yea, thy law is within my heart.*

(2.) Thou art by covenant as one of the people of God. Christ hath thy soul, thy body, thy affections; thou art Christ's

by marriage; thou hast passed thyself over unto him to be his spouse, his crown, his servant, his child, for ever.

Are these, O my soul, the grounds of thy hopes; a lively faith in Jesus? an accomplishment in some measure of the promises of the covenant? Why, these are the fuel of hope. If this be thy case, act thy hope strongly on Christ, and on the covenant of grace. Oh! hope in Jesus. Draw on thy hope yet more and more. Be not content only with an hope of expectation, but bring it on to an hope of confidence, or assurance · thou canst not fail, if thou hangest thy hope on Jesus.

Sect. V.—*Of Believing in Jesus in that respect.*

We must believe in Jesus carrying on this great work of our salvation in a way of covenant. Consider, O thou soul, to this end, these following passages:

1. Consider the gracious nature of God. That which undoes broken hearts, and trembling souls, is misconceivings of God. We have many times low thoughts of God's goodness, but we have large thoughts of his power and wrath. Now, to rectify these misapprehensions, consider his name, and therein his nature: *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keep ng mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgressions, and sins.*

2. Consider the gracious nature of Jesus Christ. Our thoughts of God are necessarily more strange than of Jesus Christ, because of our infinite distance from the Godhead; but in Christ, God is come down into our nature, and so infinite goodness and mercy is incarnate. Art thou afraid, O my soul, at his name Jah, and Jehovah? Oh! remember his name is Emmanuel; the lion is here disrobed of his garment of terror: see thy God disrobed of his terrible majesty; see thy God is a man, and thy Judge is a brother. Oh, that name Jesus! that name that sounds healing for every wound, settlement for every distraction, comfort for every sorrow. But here's the misery; souls in distress had rather be poring on hell than heaven. O my soul, how canst thou more contradict the nature of Christ, than to think him a destroyer of men? But wherein appears the gracious nature of Christ? I answer, 1. In his being incarnate. How could Jesus have manifested more willingness to save, than that the Godhead should condescend to assume our nature? 2. In his tender dealing with all sorts of sinners. He professed that he came into the world not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. He wept over Jerusalem, saying, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how oft would I have gathered thee as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings? but ye would not. And when his disciples would have had fire come down from heaven to consume those that refused him, he

reproved them, and told them, they knew not of what spirits they were. 3. In his care of his own; not caring what he suffered, so they might be saved. Alas, alas; that the Lord Jesus should pass through a life of misery, to a death more miserable, to manifest openly to the world the abundance of his love, and yet that my soul should suspect him of cruelty, or unwillingness to shew mercy! Ah, my soul, believe; never cry out, my sins, my sins! there is a gracious nature in Jesus Christ to pardon all.

3. Consider of those tenders and offers of Christ, those entreaties and beseechings to accept of Christ, which are made in the gospel. What is the gospel? or what is the sum of all the gospel, but this! O take Christ, and life in Christ, that thou mayst be saved. What mean these free offers? *Ho every one that thirsteth, come to the waters; and whosoever will, let him take of the waters of life freely;* and, *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* God is the first suitor and solicitor; he first prays the soul to take Christ. Hark at the door! who is it that knocks there? who is it that calls now, even now? *Open unto me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled; for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.* See him through the windows. This can be none but Christ: his sweet language of sister, love, and dove, bespeaks him Christ; his suffering language, that his head is filled with dew, and his locks with drops of the night, bespeaks him Christ. But hearken the motion he makes to thy soul: Soul! consider what price I have given to save thee. This my body was crucified, my hands and feet nailed, my heart pierced, and through anguish I was forced to cry, my soul is heavy, heavy unto death! and now what remains for thee but only to believe? See all things ready on my part, justification, sanctification, salvation. I will be thy God, and thou shalt be of the number of my people. I offer now myself and merits, and benefits flowing therefrom, and I entreat thee to accept of this offer. Oh! take Christ, and life and salvation in Christ. What, is this the voice of my Beloved? are these the entreaties of Jesus? and, O my soul, wilt thou not believe? wilt thou not accept of this gracious offer of Christ! Oh! consider who it is that proclaimeth, inviteth, beseecheth. If a poor man should offer thee mountains of gold, thou mightest doubt of performance, because he is not of that power; if a covetous rich man should offer thee thousands of silver, thou mightest doubt of performance, because it is contrary to his nature: but Christ is neither poor, nor covetous; as he is able, so his name is gracious, and his nature is to be faithful in performance, his covenant is sealed with his blood, and confirmed by his oath, that all shall have pardon that will but come in, and believe. Oh!

then let these words of Christ, whose lips are dropping down myrrh, prevail with my soul. Say amen to his offer; I believe, Lord help my unbelief.

4. Consider those commands of Christ, which, notwithstanding all thy excuses or pretences, he fastens on thee to believe. *And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ.* Surely this command should entirely outweigh all countermands of flesh and blood, of Satan, nature, reason, sense, and all the world. Why, this command is thy very ground and warrant, against which the very gates of hell can never prevail. When Abraham had a command to kill his only son with his own hand, though it was matter of as great grief as could possibly pierce his heart, yet he would readily submit to it; how much more shouldst thou obey, when God commands no more, but that thou shouldst believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ? There is no evil in this command; no, it comprehends in it all good imaginable. Have Christ, and thou hast with him the excellency and variety of all blessings both of heaven and earth; have Christ, and thou hast with him a discharge of all those endless and easeless torments of hell; have Christ, and thou hast with him the glorious Deity itself, to be enjoyed through him to all eternity. O then, believe in Jesus! Suffer not the devil's cavils, and the groundless exceptions of thine own heart, to prevail with thee against the direct commandment of Almighty God.

5. Consider the messages of Christ, which he daily sends by the hands of his gospel ministers. *We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God.* What a wonder is here! would not an earthly prince disdain to send to his rebellious slaves for reconcilement? It is otherwise with Christ; he is content to put up at our hands all indignities and affronts; he is glad to sue to us first, and to send his ambassadors day after day, beseeching us to be reconciled unto him. O incomprehensible depth of unspeakable mercy and encouragement to come to Christ! Wilt thou take Christ to thy bridegroom, and forsake all others? This is the message which God hath bid me to deliver to thee: the Lord Jesus expects an answer from thee; and I should be glad to return a fit answer to him that sent me. Say then, wilt thou have Christ for thy husband? wilt thou enter into covenant with him? wilt thou surrender up thy soul to thy God? wilt thou rely on Christ, and apply Christ's merits particularly to thyself? wilt thou believe? for that is it I mean by taking, receiving, and marrying of Christ. O happy if I could but join Christ and thy soul together this day! O happy thou, if thou wouldst this day be persuaded by a poor ambassador of Christ! Blame me not, if I am an importunate messenger. If ever I hear from thee, let me hear some good news, that I

may return it to heaven, and give God the glory. Come, say on; art thou willing to have Christ? wouldst thou have thy name enrolled in the covenant of grace? shall God be thy God, and Christ thy Christ? wilt thou have the person of Christ, and all those privileges flowing from the blood of Christ? sure thou art willing, art thou not? Stay then; thou must take Christ on these terms; thou must believe on him; thou must take him as thy Saviour and Lord; thou must take him, and forsake all others for him. This is the true faith, the condition of the covenant. Oh! believe in Jesus, and the covenant is established, and all doubts removed.

Sect. VI.—*Of Loving Jesus in that respect.*

6. We must love Jesus, as carrying on this great work of our salvation. Go on then, O my soul, put fire to the earth, blow thy little spark, set before thee God's love, and thou canst not but love.

In God's love consider, 1. The time. 2. The properties. 3. The effects of it.

1. For the time.—1. He loved thee before the world was made. Hast thou not heard, and wilt thou ever forget it—were not those ancient loves from all eternity?—2. He loved thee in the very beginning of the world. Was not the promise expressed to Adam intended for thee? As thou sinnedst in his loins, so didst thou in his loins receive the promise, *It shall bruise thy head.* And not long after, when God established his covenant with Abraham and his seed, wast thou not one of that seed of Abraham? 3. He loves thee now more especially, not only with a love of benevolence, as before, but with a love of complacency: not only hath he struck covenant with Christ, with Adam, with Abraham, in thy behalf, but particularly and personally with thyself. And Oh! what love is this? If a woman lately conceiving, love her future fruit; how much more doth she love it when it is born and embraced in her arms? So, if God loved thee before thou hadst a being, yea, before the world, or any creature in it, had a being; how much more now? Oh the height, and depth, and length, and breadth, of this immeasurable love! O my soul, I cannot express the love of God in Christ to thee. I do but draw the picture of the sun with a coal, when I endeavour to express God's love in Christ.

2. For the properties of this love.—1. God's love to thee is a free love. *I will love them freely*, saith God. And, *The Lord did not set his love upon you, and chuse you, because ye were more in number than any people,—but because the Lord loved you.* There can be no other reason why the Lord loved thee, but because he loved thee. 2. God's love to thee is the love of all relations. Look, what a friend's love is to a friend, or

what a father's love is towards a child, or what an husband's love is towards a wife, such is God's love to thee: thou art his friend, his son, his daughter, his spouse; and God is thy all in all.

3. For the effects of his love.—1. God so loves thee, as that he hath entered a covenant with thee. Oh, what a love is this! Tell me, O my soul, is there not an infinite disparity betwixt God and thee? He is God above, and thou art a worm below: he is the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, and thon art less than the least of all the mercies of God. O wonder at such a condescension! that such a potter, and such a former of things, should come on terms of bargaining with such clay as is guilty before him! Had we the tongues of men and angels, we could never express it.

God so loves thee, as that in the covenant he gives thee all his promises. Indeed, what is the covenant but a heap of promises? As a cluster of stars makes a constellation, so a mass of promises concurreth in the covenant of grace. Wherever Christ is, clusters of divine promises grow out of him, as the rays and beams are from the sun. As God hath given thee his Son, so he hath given thee himself, and in that God hath given thee his Son and himself; this is a greater degree of love. Christians! stand amazed. Oh, what love is this to the children of men! Oh, that we should live to have our ears filled with this sound from heaven! *I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee; I am the Lord thy God. I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* O my soul, where hast thou been? Rouse up, and set before thee all these passages of God's love in Christ: are not these strong attractives to gain thy love? Canst thou chuse to love the Lord thy God? Shall not all this love of God in Christ to thee constrain thy love? God in Christ is the very element of love. Every element will to its proper place. Now God is love, and whither should thy love be carried, but to this ocean or sea of love? *Come, my beloved,* said the spouse to Christ, *let us go up early to the vine yards, let us see if the vines flourish, whether the tender grapes appear; there will I give thee my loves.* The flourishing of the vine, and the appearing of the tender grapes, are the fruits of the graces of God in the assemblies of his saints. When thou comest to the word, prayer, meditation, be sure of this, to give Christ thy love.

Sect. VII.—*Of Joying in Jesus in that respect.*

1. We must joy in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation. I know our joy here is but in part; such is the excellency of spiritual joy, that it is reserved for heaven. God will not permit it to be pure and perfect here below; and yet

such as it is, though mingled with cares and pains, it is a blessed duty; it is the light of our souls; and were it quite taken away, our lives would be nothing but horror and confusion.

O my soul, exercise this joy. Is there not cause? Come, see and own thy blessedness. Take notice of the great things the Lord hath done for thee.—1. He hath made a covenant with thee of temporal mercies. Thou hast all thou hast by freeholding of covenant-grace. Thy bread is by covenant, thy sleep is by covenant, thy safety from sword is by the covenant, the very tilling of thy land is by a covenant of grace, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 34. O how sweet is this! Every crumb is from Christ, and by virtue of a covenant of grace.

2. He hath made a covenant with thee of spiritual mercies; even a covenant of peace, and grace, and blessing, and life for evermore. God is become thy God. He is all things to thee; he hath forgiven thy sins, he hath given thee his Spirit, to lead thee, to sanctify thee, to uphold thee in that state wherein thou standest; and at last he will bring thee to a full enjoyment of himself in glory. Oh! lift up thy head, strengthen the weak hands and the feeble knees; serve the Lord with gladness, considering the day of thy salvation draweth nigh. Write it in letters of gold, that thy God is in covenant with thee, to love thee, to bless thee, and to save thee. Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and receive thee to himself, and then thou shalt fully know what it is to have a God to be thy God. If a man in covenant with God looks on him, he saith, This is my Father; if on Christ, This is my elder Brother; if on angels, These are my keepers; if on heaven, This is my house; if on the signs of heaven, fire, meteors, thunder, These are but the effects of my Father's power; if on prosperity, God hath yet better things for me in store; if on adversity, Jesus Christ hath suffered much more for me than this; if on the devil, death, and hell, *O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?* Come, poor soul, is it not thus with thee? What! art thou in covenant with God, or art thou not? If yet thou doubtest, review thy grounds of hope, and leave not there, until thou comest up to assurance. But if thou art persuaded of thy interest, Oh! then rejoice therein. Is it not a gospel-duty to rejoice in the Lord, and again to rejoice! The Lord is delighted in thy delights; he would fain have it thy constant frame and daily business to live in joy, and to be always delighting thyself in him. *Bless the Lord, O my soul,* saith David, *and all that is within me, bless his holy name.* So, rejoice in the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, rejoice in the name of God. This is true joy, when the soul unites itself to the good possessed in all its parts. And was there ever such an object of true joy as this? Hearken, as if heaven opened, and the voice came from God in heaven: *I will be a God to thee,*

and to thy seed after thee. I am the Lord thy God; and, *I will be thy God.* What! doth not thine heart leap in thy bosom at this sound? John the Baptist leaped in his mother's womb for joy, at the sound of Mary's voice; and doth not thy soul spring within thee at this voice of God? O wonder! some can delight themselves in sin; and is not God better than sin? If there be in thee any rejoicing faculty, now awake, and stir it up. It is the Lord thy God whom thou art to rejoice in; it is he who is the top of heaven's joy, their exceeding joy: and it is he who is thy God, as well as their God. Enough, enough! or if this be not enough, hear thy duty, as the Lord commands thee: *Rejoice in the Lord,* Phil. iii. 1. *Be glad, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God,* Joel ii. 23. *Rejoice in the Lord, all ye righteous, for praise is comely for the upright,* Psalm xxxiii. 1. *Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness,* Psal. xcvii. 12. *Let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice; let them shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name, be joyful in thee,* Psalm v. 11.

Sect. VIII.—*Of Calling on Jesus in that respect.*

We must call on Jesus, or on God the Father in and through Jesus, in reference to this gracious covenant. Now this calling on God contains prayer and praise.

1. We must pray. We must use arguments of faith, challenging God,—*turn thou me, and I shall be turned.* Why? *For thou art the Lord my God.* This covenant is the ground on which all prayers must be bottomed. The covenant, we know, contains all the promises; and what is prayer but promises turned into petitions? Thus prayed the prophet Jeremiah, *Do not abhor us, for thy name's sake; do not disgrace the throne of thy glory. Remember, break not thy covenant with us.* Why? *Art not thou the Lord our God?* And thus prayed the prophet Isaiah; *Be not wroth very sore, neither remember iniquity for ever. Behold, we beseech thee!* And why so? *We are thy people.* Be thy soul in trouble for sin and corruption; yet go to God, and plead his promise and covenant: say, as Jehoshaphat, *Lord, I know not what to do, only mine eyes are unto thee; Oh! do thou subdue mine iniquities.* Be thy soul troubled for want of strength to do this or that duty; yet go to God and Christ, and say, 'Lord, thou knowest I have no strength in myself; I am a barren wilderness; but thou hast entered into a covenant with me, that thou wilt put thy law into my inward parts, thou wilt cause me to keep thy judgments, and do them,' *Ezek.* xxxvi. 27.' Here is the way; in every want, or strait, or necessity, fly to God and Christ, saying, 'Thou art my Father, and we are thy people; O break not thy covenant with us.'

2. We must praise.—(1.) If we would have the blessing, let us seek it with a purpose to have grace exalted: thus Moses sought pardon to this very end, that God's mercy might appear. *If thou wilt pardon their sin, thy mercy shall appear, and we shall be thankful unto thee for it;* so the words are made out by expositors, which in the text are either passionately or modestly suspended. These are prevailing requests with God, when we plead for the glorifying of his own grace. *Father, glorify thy name,* said Christ; and presently there comes a voice out of the cloud, *I have glorified it, and will glorify it again.*

(3.) If we have the blessing already, then be sure to ascribe glory unto him that hath made good his promise unto us. *Who is a God like unto thee, who passeth by the transgressions of the remnant of his heritage?* Who shall make the praise of his grace to ring through the world, that heaven and earth may wonder at the grace that hath been shewed us. *I will mention the loving-kindness of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness towards the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving-kindnesses.* See how the prophet mentions the kindnesses, the loving-kindnesses, the multitude of his loving-kindnesses, the goodness, and the great goodness, of God: he could hardly get off it; he would have God and grace to have all the glory. O, my soul! hath God entered thee into a covenant of grace? Why, then, *bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name.*

Sect. IX.—*Of Conforming to Jesus in that respect.*

We must conform to Jesus in reference to this covenant of grace. We are changed, by beholding, into the same image. If we look unto Jesus in this respect, this look will have such an influence upon us, that we shall conform to Jesus. But wherein consists this conformity? I answer, in these particulars:

1. God in Christ offers a covenant of grace to us: so we, through Christ, should embrace this gracious offer. His offers have appeared from first to last; as, 1. To Adam. 2. To Abraham. 3. To Moses. 4. To David. 5. To Israel, and to Judah. Take notice of it in that great promise of the covenant, *I will be thy God.* So God is first with us, he is the first mover, he begins with us before we begin with him: *I will bring them,* saith God, *into the bond of the covenant.* Now in this let us conform. Doth he offer? let us embrace the offer. Doth he lead the way? let us follow him step by step in that very way. Let us not prescribe unto God, let us not presume to appoint the conditions of the covenant. But come, take God

and Christ upon his own terms; submit to that way of the covenant, and to those conditions of peace, which the Lord prescribeth.

2. God in Christ keeps covenant with us; so we, through Christ, should be careful to keep covenant with God. But we must keep it. The Lord never will, never hath, broken covenant on his part: but, alas! we, on our parts, have broken the first covenant of works. Let us take heed we break not the second: for then there remains not any more place for any more covenants. As the Lord keeps covenant with us; so let us keep covenant with him; and therein is the blessing. *The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting,—to such as keep his covenant.*

Sundry acts of faith are required to this keeping of covenant:

(1.) Faith in keeping the covenant, hath always an eye to the rule and command of God. As in things to be believed, faith looks on the promise; so in things to be practised, faith looks on the command. Faith will present no strange fire before the Lord, it knows that God will accept of nothing but what is according to his own will.

(2.) As faith takes direction from the rule; so in keeping of the covenant, it directs us to the right end, that is, to the glory of God. We are of him, and live in him; and by faith we must live to him and for him. *For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself: for whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's.*

(3.) Faith in keeping the covenant shields the soul against all hinderances that it meets with. Sometimes we are tempted by the baits and allurements of the world. All these will I give thee, saith the world, if thou wilt be mine; but then faith overcomes the world, by setting before us better things than these. Sometimes we are tempted by crosses, afflictions, persecutions, and sufferings for the name of Christ; but then faith makes us conquerors through Christ that loved us, by setting before us the end of our faith and patience.

(4.) Faith encourageth the soul, that the Lord will have a gracious respect unto its keeping covenant. *In every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him.* Surely this is no small encouragement to well-doing. What would not a servant do, if he knew his lord would take it in good part? Now faith assures the soul, there is not one prayer, one holy desire, or one good thought, or word which is spoken or done to the glory of God, but God takes notice of it, and accepts it in good part.

Oh my soul! art thou acquainted with these acts of faith, enabling thee in some good measure to keep covenant with

God? Then is there a sweet conformity betwixt thee and Jesus.

3. God in Christ hath highly honoured us, as we are his people; so we through Christ should honour him highly, as he is our God. This is the main end of the covenant. Oh my soul! be like to God, bear the image and resemblance of God thy Father, in this respect: he hath humbled himself to advance thee; then humble thyself to advance him, and endeavour every way to exalt his name.

We are willing to be in covenant with God, that we may set up ourselves, that we may sit upon thrones, and possess a kingdom! but we must think especially of setting up the Lord upon his throne. *Ascribe greatness to our God*, saith Moses, make it a name and a praise unto him, that he hath vouchsafed to make us his people, and to take us into covenant with himself. Honour him, as he is God; but honour him more abundantly, as he is our God. Who should honour him, if his people do not? The world knows him not; the world will not seek after God;—*God is not in all their thoughts.* And shall God have no honour? shall he that stretched out the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth, and formed man upon it, have no glory? Oh yes! The Lord himself answers, *This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise.* Surely, God will have praise from his own people, whom he hath taken unto himself. He will be glorified in all that come near him.

But, how should we honour God? I answer,—We must lie under the authority of every word of God, and conform ourselves to the examples of God; that is, we must labour to become followers of God, and imitate his virtues. It is a part of that honour which children owe to their parents, to obey their commands, and to imitate their example. We cannot honour God more, than when we are humbled at his feet to receive his word, than when we renounce the manners of the world, to become his followers as dear children. Oh! think of this; for when we conform indeed, then we are holy as he is holy, pure as he is pure; and then, how should this but tend to the honour and glory of our good God?

Thus far we have looked on Jesus as our Jesus in that dark time before his coming in the flesh. Our next work is to look on Jesus as carrying on the great work of man's salvation in his first coming or incarnation.

LOOKING UNTO JESUS,

IN HIS BIRTH.

BOOK III.

CHAP. I.

Sect. I.—*Of the Tidings of Christ.*

IN this period, as in the former, we shall first lay down the object; and, secondly, direct you how to look unto it.

The object is Jesus, carrying on the work of man's salvation, in his first coming in the flesh, until his coming again. But because in this long period we have many transactions, which we cannot with conveniency dispatch together; we shall therefore break it into smaller pieces, and present this object, Jesus Christ—1. In his birth. 2. In his life. 3. In his death. 4. In his resurrection. 5. In his ascension, cession at God's right hand, and mission of his Holy Spirit. 6. In his intercession for his saints; in which business he will be employed till his second coming to judgment.

1. First, For the transactions of Jesus in his birth. Some things we must propound before, and some things after his birth; so that we shall continue this period till the time of John's baptism, or the exercise of his ministry upon earth. Now in all the transactions of this time, we shall especially handle these: 1. The tidings of Christ. 2. The conception of Christ. 3. The duplicity of natures in Christ. 4. The wonderful union, notwithstanding that distinction. 5. The birth of Christ. 6. Some consequents after his birth, whilst yet a child of twelve years old.

The first passage in relation to his birth, is, the tidings of Christ: this appears, Luke i. 26, 27, 28, &c. *And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God,* &c. I shall a little insist on some of these words.

1. The messenger is an angel. Man was too mean to carry the news of the conception of God. Never any business was conceived in heaven, that did so much concern the earth, as the conception of the God of heaven in a womb of earth; no less, therefore, than an angel was worthy to bear these tidings; and never angel received a greater honour, than of this embassage.

2. This angel salutes the Virgin; *Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women.* Many men and women have been, and are, the spiritual temples of God; but never was any the material temple of God, but only Mary; and therefore, blessed art thou amongst women: and yet we cannot say that she was so blessed in bearing Christ, as she was in believing in Christ; her bearing was more miraculous, but her believing was more beneficial to her soul.

3. This virgin is troubled at this salute. She might well be troubled; for 1. If it had been but a man that had come in so suddenly, when she expected none; or so secretly, when she had no other company; or so strongly, the doors being probably shut; she had cause to be troubled: how much more, when the glory of the angel heightened the astonishment? 2. Her sex was more subject to fear: if Zachary was amazed with the sight of this angel, how much more the Virgin! But the angel comforts her; *Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favour with God.*

4. Here is the foundation of her comfort, and our happiness; *Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus.* Never was mortal creature thus honoured, that her womb should yield that flesh, which was personally united to the godhead; that she should bear him that upholds the world. There is one wonder in the conception, another in the fruit; both are marvellous, but the latter is more mysterious, and fuller of admiration: the fruit of the womb is Jesus, a Saviour, the Son of the Highest, a King; God shall give him a throne, and he shall reign for ever; for *of his kingdom there shall be no end.* Here was a Son, and such a Son as the world never had before; and here was the ground of Mary's joy: how could she but rejoice, to hear what her Son should be before he was? Surely, never was any mother so glad of her son born, as this virgin was of her son before he was conceived.

The ground of this joy lay more especially in that name of Jesus. Here, Christians, is the object that you are to look unto. The first title that the angel gives our Saviour, is, Jesus Saviour. Oh come! let us dwell a little here. Without Jesus we had never known God our friend! and without Jesus, God had never known us for any other than his enemies. This name Jesus is better to us than all the titles of God. Indeed, there is goodness and greatness in the name Jehovah; but we merited so little good, and demerited so much evil, that in it alone there had been small comfort for us; but in the name of Jesus there is comfort, and with the name of Jesus there is comfort in the name of God. In old times, God was known by his names of power, and of majesty; but his name of mercy was reserved till now, when God did purpose to pour out the whole treasure of his mercy, by the mediation of his Son. And

as this name is exalted above all names; so are we to exalt his mercy above all his works. Oh, it is an useful name! In all depths, distresses, miseries, perplexities, we beseech God by the name of Jesus, to make good his own name,—not to bear it for nought; but as he is a Saviour, to save us: and this is our comfort, that God will never so remember our sins, as to forget his own blessed name; and especially this name Jesus. It is the highest, the dearest, the sweetest name to us of all the names of God.

The reason of this name was given by the angel to Joseph: *Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.* But why from their sins? We seem rather willing to be saved from poverty, ignominy, prison, death, hell. Sin is a thing that troubles but few: alas! sin, if we understand it, is the very worst of evils: there is no poverty but sin, there is no shame but sin; there is no prison, but that prison is a paradise without sin; there is no death that has any sting in it, but for sin; *the sting of death is sin;* take out the sting, and you may put the serpent in your bosom: nay, I'll say more, there would be no hell, were it not for sin: sin first kindled the fire of hell, sin fuels it; take away sin, and that tormenting flame goes out. Had it not been for sin, the devil had no business in the world; were it not for sin, he could never hurt a soul.

What abundance of benefits are here in one word, *He shall save his people from their sins!* There is no evil incident to man, but it ceaseth to be evil when sin is gone. If Jesus takes away sin, he doth bless our very blessings, and sanctify our afflictions: he fetcheth peace out of trouble, riches out of poverty, honour out of contempt, liberty out of bondage: he pulls out the sting of death, puts out the fire of hell: as all evils are wrapt up in sin; so he that saves us from sin, saves us from all evils whatsoever.

This is that Jesus, the Son of God's love, the author of our salvation, in whom alone God is well pleased; and whom the angel published before he was conceived: *Thou shalt conceive, and bring forth a Son, and shall call his name Jesus.*

Sect. II.—*Of the Conception of Christ.*

The conception of Christ, was the conclusion of the angel's message. No sooner had the Virgin said, *Be it to me according to thy word;* but according to that word it was: immediately the Holy Ghost overshadowed her, and forms our Saviour in her womb. Now! brethren, now was the time of life. Well may we say, Now was it that the day brake up, that the sun arose, that darkness vanished, that wrath gave place to favour and salvation: now was it, that free grace came down from heaven, thousands of angels waiting on her; the very clouds part, as it

were, to give her way; the earth springs to welcome her; the floods clap their hands for joy; the heavenly hosts sing as she goes along, *Glory to God in the highest, peace upon earth, good will towards man:* truth and righteousness go before her, peace and prosperity follow after her, pity and mercy wait on either hand; and when she first sets her foot on the earth, she cries, 'A Jesus! a Saviour!—Hear, ye sons of men!—The Lord hath sent me down to bring you news of Jesus!—Grace and peace be unto you: I will live with you in this world, and you shall live with me in the world to come.' Here was blessed news: this is gospel, pure gospel; this is glad tidings: free grace proclaims Jesus; and Jesus is made up as it were all of free grace. What eternal thanks do we owe to the eternal God! How may we say with the angels, Glory to God for Jesus Christ!

But in this conception of Christ are so many wonders, that ere we begin to speak them, we may stand amazed: *Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God manifest in the flesh.* Say, is it not a wonder, a mystery, a great mystery, that the Son of God should be made of a woman, even made of that woman which was made by himself? Is it not a wonder, that her womb then, and that the heavens now, should contain him, *whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain!*—Concerning this conception of Christ, I shall speak but a little: what man can conceive much of this? Our greatest light we borrow from the angel, who describes it thus: *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee.*

Out of these words, observe, 1. The agent. 2. The effect.

1. The agent or efficient cause of Christ's conception, is the Holy Ghost. This agrees with that speech of the angel to Joseph: *That which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost.* This conception of Christ was by the operation, or virtue of the Holy Ghost; or by the energetical command and ordination of the Holy Ghost, whereby that part of the Virgin's blood, or seed whereof the body of Christ was to be framed, was so cleansed and sanctified, that in it there should be neither spot nor stain of original pollution.

2. The effect was the framing of Christ's manhood, in which we may observe the matter and manner. 1. For the matter: observe we the matter of the body, and of the soul, of Christ. (1.) The matter of the body of Christ was the very flesh and blood of the Virgin: *he was made of a woman*, saith the apostle, *i. e.* of the flesh and blood, and substance of the woman; and, *he was made of the seed of David*, saith the apostle, *according to flesh;* otherwise he could not have been the Son of David according to the flesh. (2.) The soul of Christ was not derived from the soul of the Virgin, but it was made as the souls of other men be, *i. e.* of nothing, by the power of God; and so infused into the body by the hand of God.

2. For the manner of forming Christ's human nature, it was miraculous. The angel ascribes two actions to the Holy Ghost in this great work: the one, to come upon the Virgin; the other, to overshadow her: by the first is signified the extraordinary work of the Holy Ghost in fashioning the human nature of Christ.

The second action ascribed to the Holy Ghost, is, overshadowing of the Virgin: this teacheth us that we should not search overmuch into this great mystery. Alas! it is too high for us; if the course of ordinary generation be a secret, how past all comprehension is this extraordinary operation! "I know the Word was made flesh," saith Chrysostom; "but how he was made, I know not."

Sect. III.—*Of the Duplicity of Natures in Christ.*

The duplicity of natures in Christ appears, in that he was truly God and truly man. *To us a child is born*, saith the prophet; there is a nature human: *and he shall be called the mighty God;* there is a nature divine. *God sent his Son*, saith the apostle, therefore truly God; and that Son *made of a woman*, therefore truly man.

That Christ is true God, both apparent scriptures, and unanswerable reasons drawn from scriptures, evince.

1. The scriptures call him God. *In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.—And unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever.—And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord, and my God!—Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.—And hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us.—And we know that the Son of God is come. This is the true God, and eternal life.—And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifested in the flesh.*

2. Unanswerable reasons drawn from scriptures, prove him God: thus it appears—

(1.) From those incommunicable properties of the Deity which are ascribed unto him: He is eternal as God, Rev. i. 17. He is infinite as God, Matt. xxviii. 20. He is omniscient as God, Matt. ix. 4. He is omnipotent as God; *He that cometh from above is above all—He is able to subdue all things unto himself—He hath the keys of hell and death.*

(2.) From those acts ascribed to him, which are only agreeable to the divine nature; as, to hear the prayers of the people, John xiv. 14. To judge the quick and the dead, John v. 22. And thus he creates as God, John i. 4. He commands as God, Matt.

viii. 26. He forgives as God, Matt. ix. 6. He sanctifies as God, John i. 12. He glorifies as God, John x. 21.

(3.) From all those acknowledgments given to him by the saints, which are only proper unto God; and thus he is believed on as God, John iii. 18. He is loved as God, 1 Cor. xvi. 22. He is obeyed as God, Matt. xvii. 5. He is prayed to as God, Acts vii. 59. He is praised as God, Rev. v. 13. He is adored as God, Heb. i. 6. Phil. ii. 10. Surely all these are strong demonstrations, that Christ Jesus is God. But why was it requisite that our Saviour should be God? I answer,

1. Because none can save souls, nor satisfy for sin, but God alone. *There is none,* saith the Psalmist, *that can by any means redeem his brother, or give a ransom for him.—But God will redeem my soul from the power of hell.* 2. Because the satisfaction which is made for sin, must be infinitely meritorious: and infinite wrath cannot be appeased, but by an infinite merit; and hence our Saviour must needs be God, to the end that his obedience and sufferings might be of infinite worth. 3. Because the burden of God's wrath cannot be endured by a finite creature: Christ therefore must be God, that he might abide the burden by his divine power. 4. Because the enemies of our salvation were too strong for us: how could any creature overcome Satan, death, hell, damnation? Ah! this required the power of God; there's none but God that could destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.

2. As Christ is God, so he is true man. He was born as man, and bred as man, and fed as man, and slept as man, and wept as man, and sorrowed as man, and suffered as man, and died as man.

But more particularly. (1.) Christ had a human body: *Wherefore when he came into the world he said, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared.*

(2.) Christ had an human reasonable soul: *My soul is heavy unto death,* saith Christ; and again, *Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit.* "Surely," saith Nazianzen, "either he had a soul, or he will never save a soul."

(3.) Christ had all the properties that belong either to the soul or body of a man: nay, more than so, Christ had all the infirmities of our nature, sin only excepted: I say the infirmities of our nature, as cold, and heat, and hunger, and thirst, and weariness, and weakness, and pain.

But why was it requisite that our Saviour should be man? I answer, 1. Because our Saviour must suffer and die for our sins, which the godhead could not do. 2. Because our Saviour must perform obedience to the law. 3. Because our Saviour must satisfy the justice of God in the same nature wherein it was offended. 4. *Because by this means we might have free access to the throne of grace, and might find help in our necessities,*

having such an High-priest as was in all things tempted like unto us, Heb. iv. 15.

A real distinction of these two natures is evident: 1. In regard of essence; the godhead cannot be the manhood, nor can the manhood be the godhead. 2. In regard of properties, the godhead is most wise, just, omnipotent, yea, wisdom, justice, omnipotence itself; and so is not the manhood, neither can it be. 3. They have distinct wills: *Not my will, but thy will be done, O Father?* plainly differencing the will of a creature from the will of a Creator. 4. The very actions in the work of redemption are inseparable, and yet distinguishable: *I lay down my life, and take it up again.* To lay it down was the action of man, not of God; and to take it up, was the action of God, not of man: in these respects we say each nature remains in itself entire, without any conversion, commixtion, or confusion: there is no conversion of one into the other, as when he changed the water into wine; no composition of both, no abolition of either, no confusion at all.—It is easy to observe this real distinction of his two natures from first to last: as, 1. he was conceived as others, and so he was man; but he was conceived by the Holy Ghost, as never man was, and so he is God.

2. He was born as others, and so he was man; but he was born of a virgin, as never man was, and this speaks him as God. 3. He was crucified, died, and was buried, and so he was man; but he rose again from the dead, ascended into heaven, and from thence shall come at last to judge the quick and the dead, and so he is God.

Sect. IV.—*Of the Union of the two Natures of Christ in one and the same Person.*

The union of two natures of Christ, in one and the self-same person, is that great wonder, which now we must speak of as we are able. But, alas! how should we speak of this union, and not be confounded in ourselves? It is a great mystery, a secret, a wonder. Many wonders have been since the beginning of the world; but all the wonders that ever were must give place to this. Neither the creation of all things out of nothing, nor the restoration of all things into their perfect being; I mean, neither the first work, nor the last work, of God in this world (though most admirable) may be compared with this. This union of the two natures of Christ in one person, is the highest pitch of God's wisdom, goodness, power, and glory.

In the explication of this union, that which I shall insist on, as the most necessary for our understanding, is, I. The union itself. II. The effects or benefits of it.

I. For the union itself we shall discuss, 1. Wherein this union consists. 2. The scriptural texts that confirm this union. 3. The

person assuming; and the nature assumed: and of these as briefly as I may.

This union consists in that dependence of the human nature on the Word, and in that communicating of the person or substance of the Word, with the human nature that is assumed; so that it is such an union that both natures make one person of Christ.

2. For the scriptural texts that confirm this union: among many I shall only cite these:

When Christ asked his apostles, *Who do men say that I the Son of man am?—Simon Peter answered, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.* Now if but one Christ, then surely but one person: and if the Son of man be the Son of the living God, then surely there are two natures in that one person. Observe how the Son of man and the Son of God, very man and very God, concentre in Christ; as the soul and the body make but one man, so the Son of man and the Son of God made but one Christ: thou art Christ, saith Peter, the Son of the living God.

So Paul, speaking of Jesus the Son of God, tells us, *that he was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God, according to the spirit.* First, *made of the seed of David;* of the substance of the Virgin, who was David's posterity. Secondly, *declared to be the Son of God:* the word in the original signifies a declaration by a solemn sentence or definitive judgment. *I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, thou art my Son.* That which I point at: he is the son of David, in respect of his manhood; and he is the Son of God, in respect of his godhead; here be the two natures; but in the words before, these two natures make but one Son, Jesus Christ our Lord: and in the very words themselves he is declared to be the Son of God; he doth not say Sons, as of two; but his Son Jesus Christ, first before, and then after; to shew unto us, that as before his making, so after his making, he is still but one Son, or one person of the two distinct natures subsisting.

To the same purpose is that text; *In him dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily;* by the union of the divine nature with the human in the unity of his person, the godhead dwelleth in Christ as the soul in the body: *it dwelleth in him bodily;* not seemingly, but really; not figuratively, and in a shadow, as he dwelleth in the temple; not by power and efficacy, as he dwells in all the creatures; not by grace, as in his people; nor by glory, as in the saints above; but essentially, substantially, personally, the human nature being assumed into union with the person of the Word. Observe the passages: he in whom that fulness dwells is the person; that fulness, which doth so dwell in him, is the nature: now there dwells in him not only the fulness of the godhead, but the fulness of the manhood also; for we believe

him to be both perfect God, begotten of the substance of his Father before all worlds; and perfect man, made of the substance of his mother in this world: only he, in whom the fulness of the godhead dwelleth, is one; and he in whom the fulness of the manhood dwelleth, is another; but he in whom the fulness of both these natures dwelleth, is one and the same Immanuel, and consequently one and the same person; in him, *i. e.* in his person, dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead, and all the fulness of the manhood: *In him dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily.*

3. For the person assuming, and the nature assumed: (1.) The person assuming, was a divine person: it was not the divine nature that assumed an human person, but the divine person that assumed an human nature; and of the three divine persons, it was neither the first nor the third, neither the Father nor the Holy Ghost, that did assume this nature; but it was the Son, the middle person.

(2.) The nature assumed was the seed of Abraham; *For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham.* Elsewhere the apostle calls it the *seed of David;* he is made the seed of David according to the flesh: and, elsewhere, he is called the seed of the woman: *I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed; and when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman*: No question she was the material principle of which that precious flesh was made, and the Holy Ghost, the agent and efficient; that blessed womb of her's was the bridechamber, wherein the Holy Ghost did knit that indissoluble knot betwixt our human nature and his deity: the Son of God assuming into the unity of his person, that which before he was not, even our human nature. Oh! with what astonishment may we behold our dust and ashes assumed into the unity of God's own person!

These are the deep things of God, and indeed so exceedingly mystical, that they can never be perfectly declared by any man. Bernard compares this ineffable mystery of the union of the two natures, with that incomprehensible mystery of the trinity in unity. In the Trinity are three persons and one nature; in Christ are two natures and one person; that of the Trinity is indeed the greatest, and this of the incarnation is like unto it; they both far exceed man's capacity; *for his ways is in the sea, and his path in the great waters, and his footsteps are not known.*

II. For the effects and benefits of this union; they are either in respect of Christ, or in respect of Christians.

1st. Those in respect of Christ, are, 1. An exemption of all sin. 2. A collation of all graces. 3. A communication of all the properties.

1. We find that although Christ appeared as a sinner, and that he was numbered among the wicked, or with the transgressors, *Isa.* liii. 12. yet in truth he did no sin, neither was any guile found in his mouth, 1 *Pet.* ii. 22. The apostle tells us, he was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners: he assumed the nature of man, yet by reason of this pure conception, and of this union, he was conceived, and born, and lived without sin; he took upon him the seed of man, but not the sin of man, save only by imputation.

2. The graces collated unto the humanity of Christ by reason of his union, are very many: I shall instance in some:

(1.) That the manhood is a peculiar temple for the deity of Christ to dwell in: it is the place wherein the godhead shews itself more manifestly and more gloriously than in any other creature: it is true, that by his providence he shews himself in all his creatures, and by his grace in his saints; but he is most gloriously, eternally, according to the fulness of his deity, in the humanity of Jesus Christ: *in him dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily.* Some are of opinion, that as now in this life, no man cometh unto God but by Christ: so hereafter, in the next life, no man shall see God, but in the face of Jesus Christ.

(2.) That the manhood of Christ, according to its measure, is a partner with the godhead in the work of redemption and mediation: as he is Immanuel in respect of his person, so he is Immanuel in respect of his office. He must needs be man as well as God, that he might be able to send this comfortable message to the sons of men; *Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.*

(3.) That the manhood of Christ, together with the godhead, is adored and worshipped with divine honour: not that we worship the manhood alone, as merely a creature; but that we adore the person of Christ, which consisteth of the manhood and of the godhead.

(4.) That the manhood hath an extraordinary measure of habitual graces poured into it. In this he excels the very angels, for to them was given grace only by measure; but to the humanity of Christ was given grace without measure; even so much as a creature is any ways capable of. Never was there any but Christ, whose graces were no way stinted, and was absolutely full of grace. Divines tell us of a double grace in Christ; the one of union, and that is infinite; the other of unction, (which is all one with grace habitual,) and that is in a sort infinite; for howsoever it be but a finite and created thing, yet in the nature of grace, it hath no limitation, no bounds, but includeth in itself whatsoever any way pertains to grace. The reason of this illimited grace bestowed on the nature of man in Christ, was, for that grace was given to it as to the universal cause, whence

it was derived unto all others. He is the fountain of grace, and of his fulness we receive grace for grace.

3. For the communication of the properties. It is a kind of speech peculiar to the scriptures, when the properties of either nature of Christ considered singly are attributed to the person of Christ. Thus we may say, that God was born of a virgin, and that God suffered, and God was crucified; not simply in respect of his godhead, but in respect of his person, or in respect of the human nature which God united to himself. And thus we may say, that the man Christ is almighty, omniscient, omnipresent, yet not in respect of his manhood, but in respect of the person which is God and man; or in respect of the divine nature of the man Christ Jesus: for here, man signifies the whole person of Christ, and not the human nature: but on the contrary, we may not say, that the godhead of Christ was born of a virgin, or suffered, or was crucified; nor may we say, that the manhood of Christ is almighty, omniscient, omnipresent; because the godhead and manhood are such words, as note to us the two natures of Christ, the one divine, and the other human, and no the person of Christ.

2d. The effects or benefits of this hypostatical union, in respect of Christians, are their spiritual union and communion with God and Christ.

1. There is a spiritual union of Christians with God in Christ. Oh, the wonder of these two blessed unions! first, of the personal union; secondly, of the spiritual or mystical union. In the personal union, it pleased God to assume and unite our human nature to the deity; in this spiritual union, it pleased God to unite the person of every believer to the person of the Son of God. This union is mystical, and yet our very persons, natures, bodies, souls, are in a spiritual way conjoined to the body and soul of Christ; so that we are members of the body of Christ, and of the flesh of Christ, and of the bones of Christ; and as this conjunction is immediately made with his human nature, so thereby we are also united to the divine nature; yea, the person of the believer is united to the glorious person of the Son of God.

Now, concerning this union, for our better understanding, observe these three things.

(1.) It is a most real union: it is not a mere notional union, that consists only in the understanding; it is not an imaginary thing, that hath no other being but only in the brain; no, it is a true, real union. In natural unions, I confess, there may be more evidence, but there cannot be more truth.

(2.) It is a very near union. You will say, how near? If an angel were to speak to you, he cannot satisfy you in this; only as far as our understanding can reach it, and the creatures can serve to illustrate these things, take it thus: whatsoever by way of comparison can be alleged concerning the combination

of any one thing with another, that, and much more, may be said of our union with Jesus Christ. See how near the father and the child are, how near the husband and the wife are; see what union is between the branches and the vine, the members and the head; nay, one thing more, see what the soul is to the body: such is Christ and so near is Christ, and nearer, to the person of every true believer. *I live, yet not I,* saith Paul, *but Christ liveth in me.* As if he had said, As the soul is to the body of a natural man, so is Jesus Christ to my soul and body.

(3.) It is a total union; that is, whole Christ is united to the whole believer, soul and body. If thou art united to Christ, thou hast all Christ; thou art one with him in his nature, in his name; thou hast the same image, grace, and spirit in thee, as he hath; the same precious promises, the same access to God by prayer as he; thou hast the same love of the Father; all that he did or suffered, thou hast a share in it; thou hast his life and death; all is thine. So, on thy part, he hath thee wholly, thy nature, thy sins, the punishment of thy sins, thy wrath, thy curse, thy shame; yea, thy wit, and wealth, and strength, all that thou art, or hast, or canst do possibly for him. It is a total union: *My beloved is mine, and I am his:* whole Christ is mine, and all that I am, have, or can do, is his.

2. There is a spiritual communion with God in Christ. Both these are the effects of Christ's personal union: first, union to his person, and then communion with his benefits. Union, in proper speaking, is not unto any of the benefits flowing to us from Christ; we are not united to forgiveness of sin, holiness, peace of conscience, but unto the person of the Son of God himself: and then, secondly, comes this communication of all the benefits arising from this union to the Lord Jesus—that as Christ was priest, prophet, and king; so we also by him are, after a sort, priests, prophets, and kings; for being made one with him, we are thereby possessed of all things that are his.

Sect. V.—*Of the Birth of Christ.*

The birth of Christ now follows. A thing so wonderful, that it was given for a sign unto believers seven hundred and forty years before it was accomplished: *Therefore the Lord himself shall give a sign; behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son.* But come a little nearer; let us go to Bethlehem, as the shepherds said, and see this thing which is come to pass! If we step but one step into his lodging, heaven's wonder is before our eyes: now look upon Jesus! look on him as in fulness of time he carried on the great work of our salvation. Here you may read the meaning of Adam's covenant, Abraham's promise, Moses's revelation, David's succession; these were but veils, but now shall we draw aside the curtains. Come, take a view

of the truth itself. What a strange birth is this! Look on the babe, there is no cradle to rock him, no nurse to lull him, no linens to swaddle him, scarce a little food to nourish him. Look on the mother; there's no midwives' help, no downy pillows, no linen hangings, scarce a little straw where she is brought a-bed. Look on Joseph, his supposed father; he rather begs than gives a blessing; poor carpenter! that makes them a chamber of an ox-stall. Mary must bear a Son; an angel tells her, the Holy Ghost overshadows her; the days are accomplished, and she is delivered.

No sooner was Christ born, but righteousness looked down from heaven; she cast her eye upon earth, and seeing truth freshly sprung there, she looked and looked again: certainly it was a sight to draw all the eyes of heaven to it. It is said of the angels, that they *desired* to look into these things. They looked wishfully at them, as if they would look through them. No question but righteousness looked as narrowly and piercingly as the angels. Some observe, that the Hebrew word, *she looked down*, signifies, that she beat out a window, so desirous was righteousness to behold the sight of Christ born, that she beats out a window in heaven. Before this time, she would not so much as look down towards the earth: righteousness had no prospect, no window open, this way. But now the case is altered: no sooner doth our vine bud upon the earth, but she is willing to condescend, and so willing, that she breaks a window through the walls of heaven to look down: and no marvel; for what could righteousness desire to see and satisfy herself in, that was not to be seen in Jesus Christ? He was all-righteous, there was not the least spot of sin in him: his birth was clean, his life was holy, and his death was innocent. Both his soul and body were without all sin; both his spirit and his mouth were without all guile: whatsoever satisfaction righteousness would have, she might have it in him. *Lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the balance*, and there is nothing in Jesus but straightness for the line, and full weight for the balance.

For the meeting and agreement of all God's attributes as the effect of this, the verse before tells us, that *mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other.*— Many means were made before Christ's time for this blessed meeting; but it would not be: *Sacrifice and burnt-offering thou wouldest not;* these means were not prevalent enough to cause it. Where stuck it? you will say: surely it was not long of mercy, she was easy to be entreated: she looked up to heaven, but righteousness would not look down; and indeed here was the business: righteousness must and will have satisfaction; either some satisfaction for sin must be given to God, or she will never meet more; better that all the men in the world were damned, than that the righteousness of God should be un-

righteous. But our Saviour is born; and this birth occasions a gracious meeting of the attributes: such an attractive is this birth, that all meet there; indeed they cannot but meet in him. Christ is mercy, and Christ is truth, and Christ is righteousness, and Christ is peace.

1. Christ is mercy. Thus Zacharias prophesied; that through the tender mercy of our God the day-spring (or branch) from on high hath visited us: and God, the Father of Christ, is called the Father of mercies; as if mercy were his Son, who had no other Son but his dearly beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased.

2. Christ is truth. *I am the way, and the truth, and the life;* that truth, in whom is accomplished whatsoever was prefigured of the Messiah. And this is his name, *The Lord, The Lord God, abundant in goodness and truth.—He is a God of truth,* said Moses;—*plenteous in mercy and truth,* said David;—*full of grace and truth,* said John. He is truth by name, and truth by nature, and truth by office.

3. Christ is righteousness. *This is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our righteousness.*

4. Christ is peace. *This is his name whereby he is called; Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.* And according to his type, Melchisedech, as he was King of righteousness, so also he was King of Salem, which is King of peace. Thus Christ is mercy, and Christ is truth, and Christ is righteousness, and Christ is peace. Now where should all these meet, but in him who is them all? Surely there they meet, and at the meeting they all ran first and kissed the Son; and that done, truth ran to mercy, and embraced her; and righteousness to peace, and kissed her: they that had so long been parted, now they meet, and are made friends again. O the blessed effects of this birth of Christ! It is Christ that reconciled them, and reconciled us to them. He reconciled all things, saith the apostle, *whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.* Now is heaven at peace with itself, and heaven and earth at peace one with another; and that which glues all, and makes the peace, is this birth of Christ.

Sect. VI.—*Of some Consequents of Christ's Birth.*

Some consequents of the birth of Christ may be touched, till he was a child of twelve years old.

1. When he was but eight days old, he was circumcised, and named Jesus. In this early humiliation he plainly discovered the riches of his grace: now he sheds his blood in drops, and thereby gives an earnest of those rivers which he afterwards poured out for the cleansing of our nature, and extinguishing the wrath of God; and for a further discovery of his grace, at this time his name is given him, which was Jesus. This is the

name which we should engrave on our hearts, rest our faith on, and place our help in, and love with the overflowings of charity, joy, and adoration; above all things, we had need of Jesus, a Saviour for our souls, both from our sins, and from the everlasting destruction which sin will otherwise bring upon our souls. Hence this name Jesus, and this sign circumcision, are joined together; for by the effusion of his blood he was to be our Jesus, our Saviour: *Without shedding of blood is no remission,* no salvation. Circumcision was the seal, and now was it that our Jesus was under God's great seal to take his office: *Him hath God the Father sealed,* John vi. 27. It is his office and his very profession to save, that all may repair unto him to that end: *Come unto me, all ye that are weary; and him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.*

2. When he was forty days old, *he was brought to Jerusalem, and presented to the Lord; as it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord.* O wonder! there was no impurity in the Son of God, and yet he is first circumcised; and then he is brought, and offered to the Lord. He that came to be sin for us, would in our persons be legally unclean, that by satisfying the law, he might take away our uncleanness. He that was above the law, would come under the law, that he might free us from the law. We are all born sinners; but O the unspeakable mercies of our Jesus, that provides a remedy as early as our sin: first, he is conceived; and then he is born, to sanctify our conceptions and our births: and after his birth, he is first circumcised, and then he is presented to the Lord; that by two holy acts, that which was naturally unholy might be hallowed unto God. Christ hath not left our very infancy without redress, but by himself thus offered he cleanseth us presently from our filthiness. Now is Christ brought in his mother's arms to his own house, the temple; and as man, he is presented to himself as God. You will say, What is this to me, or to my soul? O yes! Jerusalem is now every where; there is no church-assembly, no christian heart, which is not a temple of the living God; and there is no temple of God, wherein Christ is not presented to his Father. Thus we have the benefit of Christ's fulfilling the law of righteousness: *God sent his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.*

3. When he was yet under one year old, as some, or about two, as others, he fled into Egypt. As there was no room for him in Bethlehem, so now there is no room for him in all Judea. No sooner he came to his own, but he must fly from them: what a wonder is this! Could not Christ have quit himself from Herod a thousand ways? What could an arm of flesh have done against the God of spirits? but hereby he taught us to bear the

yoke even in our youth: thus would he suffer, that he might sanctify to us our earthly afflictions. What a change is here! Israel, the first-born of God, flies out of Egypt into Judea; and Christ, the first-born of all creatures, flies out of Judea into Egypt. Now is Egypt become the sanctuary, and Judea the inquisition-house, of the Son of God. Surely he that is every where the same, knows how to make all places alike to his. He knows how to preserve Daniel in the lion's den, the three children in the fiery furnace, Jonah in the whale's belly, and Christ in the midst of Egypt.

4. When he was now five years old, say some, an angel appears again in a dream to Joseph, saying, *Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and return again into the land of Israel, for they are dead which sought the young child's life.* Herod, that took away the lives of all the infants in or about Bethlehem, is now himself dead, and gone to his own place. O the wonderful dispensation of Christ in concealing himself from men! All this while he carries himself as an infant; *take the young child and his mother.* He suppressed the manifestation and exercise of that godhead whereto the infant nature was conjoined: as the birth of Christ, so the infancy of Christ was exceedingly humble. O how should we magnify him, or deject ourselves for him, who himself became thus humble for our sakes!

5. When he was twelve years old, he, with his parents, goes up to Jerusalem, after the custom of the feast. This pious act of his younger years intends to lead our first years into timely devotion: but I shall not insist on that; I would rather observe him *sitting in the midst of the temple, both hearing them and asking them questions.* He who, as God, gave them all the wisdom they had, doth now, as the Son of man, hearken to the wisdom he had given them; and when he had heard, then he asks; and after that, no doubt he answers: his very questions were instructions; for I cannot think that he meant so much to learn, as to teach those doctors of Israel. Surely these rabbins had never heard the voice of such a tutor; they could not but see the very wisdom of God in this child; and therefore saith the text, *they all wonder,* or they were all astonished at his understanding and answers: their eyes saw nothing but a child, but their ears heard the wonderful things of God's law. But why did ye not, O ye Jewish teachers, remember now the star and the sages, the angels and the shepherds? why did ye not now bethink yourselves of Herod, and of his inquiry, and of your answer, that in Bethlehem of Judea Christ should be born? You cited the prophets, and why did you not mind that prophecy now, that *unto us a child is born, and unto us a Son is given, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace?* Fruitless is the wonder that endeth not in faith. No light is

sufficient, where the eyes are held through unbelief and prejudice.

6. After this, from the twelfth to the thirtieth year of his age, we read nothing of the acts of Christ, but that he went down with his parents unto Nazareth, and was subject to them. As he went up to Jerusalem to worship God, so he goes down to Nazareth to attend his particular calling. This is the meaning of those words, *and he was subject to them.* Christ's subjection to his parents extends to the profession and exercise of his life. Certainly Christ was not all that time, from twelve to thirty years, idle: as he was educated by his parents, so of his reputed father he learnt to be a carpenter; this, I take it, is plain in these words, *Is not this the carpenter, the Son of Mary?*

Oh, the poverty, humility, severity, of Jesus! It appears at this time especially, in his labouring, working, hewing of wood, or the like. Here's a sharp reproof to all those who spend their time in idleness, or without a particular calling. What! are they wiser than Christ? Our Jesus would not by any means thus spend his time.

But concerning this time of his youth, because in scripture there is so deep a silence, I shall therefore pass it by.

Thus far have I propounded the object we are to look unto; it is Jesus, in his first coming, or incarnation, whilst yet a child of twelve years old. Our next work is to direct you in the art or mystery, how we are to look unto him in this respect.

CHAP. II.

Sect. I.—*Of Knowing Jesus as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation in his Birth.*

What looking comprehends, you have heard before: and that we may have an inward experimental look on him whom our souls pant after, let us practise all these particulars.

1. Let us know Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation in his incarnation. Let us learn what he did for us when he came amongst us. There is not one passage in his first appearing, but it is of mighty concernment unto us. Is it possible that the great God of heaven and earth should so infinitely condescend, but on some great design? And what design could there be but only his glory and the creatures' good? O my soul! if thou hast any interest in Christ, all this concerns thee: the Lord Jesus, in these very transactions, had an eye to thee; he was incarnate for thee, he was conceived and born for thee. Look not on the bare history of things, for that is unprofitable; the main duty is eyeing the end, the meaning of Christ, and

especially as it relates to thyself. Alas! what comfort were it to a poor prisoner, if he should hear that the king, of his mere grace, visited all the prisoners in this or that dungeon, and that he made a gaol-delivery, and set all free, but never came near the place where he lies bound in irons? or suppose he gives a visit to that very man, and offers him grace and pardon, if he will but accept of it; and, because of his waywardness, persuades, entreats, commands him to come out and take his liberty; and yet if he will not regard or apply it to himself, what comfort can he have? what benefit can he receive? Dear soul, this is thy case, if thou art not in Christ; if thou hast not heard the offer, and embraced and closed with it, then what is Christ's incarnation, conception, nativity, unto thee? Come, learn, not merely as a scholar, to gain some notional knowledge; but as a Christian, as one that feels virtue coming out of Christ in every of these respects. Study closely this great transaction in reference to thyself. I know not how it happens; this subject either savours not with some Christians, or it is seldom thought of by the most. O God forbid we should throw out of doors such a blessed necessary truth! If rightly applied, it is a Christian's joy: *Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, that shall be to all people; for unto you is born in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.* Sure the birth of Christ is of mighty concernment unto thee; *unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given.* There is not any piece of this transaction but it is of special use. How many break their brains, and waste their spirits, in studying arts and sciences, things in comparison of no value? Whereas Paul determined not to know any thing but Jesus Christ. To know Jesus Christ in every point, whether in birth, or life, or death, is saving knowledge. O stand not upon cost, whether pains or study, tears or prayers, peace or wealth, goods or name, life or liberty; sell all for this pearl. Christ is of that worth that thou canst never over-buy him, though thou gavest thyself and all the world for him. The study of Christ is the study of studies; the knowledge of Christ is the knowledge of every thing that is necessary, either for this world, or for the world to come. O study Christ in every of the aforesaid respects.

Sect. II.—*Considering Jesus in that respect.*

Let us consider Jesus carrying on this great work of our salvation, at his first coming or incarnation. It is not enough to study and know these great mysteries; but, according to the measure of knowledge we have, we must muse, meditate, ponder, and consider them. This consideration brings Christ closer to the soul. Consideration fastens Christ more strongly to the soul, and, as it were, rivets the soul to Jesus Christ. A soul

that truly considers and meditates of Christ, thinks and talks of nothing else but Christ: it takes hold, and will not let him go. I will keep to thee (saith the soul in meditation) for thou art my life. Thus, O my soul, consider thou of Christ, and of what he did for thee when he was incarnate! and that thou mayest not confound thyself in thy meditations, consider apart these particulars.

1. Consider Jesus in his forerunner, and the blessed tidings of his coming in the flesh. Now the long-looked for time drew near, a glorious angel is sent from heaven, and he comes with an olive-branch of peace; first he presents himself to Zachary, and then to Mary; to her he imparts the message on which God sent him into this world: *Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus.* Till now, human nature was less than that of angels; but by the incarnation of the Word, it was to be exalted above the cherubim. What blessed tidings was this message! The decree of old must now be accomplished, and an angel proclaims it upon earth. 'Hear, O ye sons of Adam, this concerns you as much as the Virgin: were ye not all undone in the loins of your first father? was not my soul and thy soul in danger of hell-fire? was not this our condition, that after a little life upon earth, we should have been thrown into eternal torments, where had been nothing but weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth? And now that God and Christ should bid an angel tell the news—*Ye shall not die: Lo, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son,* and he shall be your Jesus: he shall save you from this hell, and death, and sin: he shall deliver your souls, he shall save to the utmost: his name is Jesus, and he shall not bear his name for nought: believe in him, and ye shall live with him in glory.' O blessed news! Men may talk what they will of this and that news, but none is so welcome to one ready to perish, as to hear of a Saviour. Tell a man in his sickness of one that will make him well again; tell a man in captivity, of one that will set him free; tell a man in prison, condemned to die, of one with a pardon that will save his life; and every one of these will say, this is the best news that ever was heard. Oh! then, if it be good tidings to hear of a saviour, where it is only a matter of loss of life, or of this earth; how much more when it comes to the loss of heaven, to the danger of hell; when our souls are at stake, and likely to be damned for ever! what glad tidings would that be, to hear of one that could save our souls from that destroyer! Is not such a Saviour worth the hearkening after? were not the birth of such a one good news? O my soul, ponder on these words, as if an angel, seeing thee stand on the brim of hell, should speak to thee, even to thy soul.

2. Consider Jesus in his conception. No sooner is the news heard, but Christ is conceived by the Holy Ghost in the Virgin's

womb: this conception is worthy our consideration. What! that the great God of heaven should condescend so far as to take our nature upon him, and to take it in the same way, and after the same manner, as we do? We must not be too curious, to inquire after the manner of the Holy Ghost's operation. This is work for our hearts, and not merely for our heads. Humble faith, and not curious inquisition, shall find the sweetness of this mystery. It was David's complaint, *Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.* O my soul, this was thy case in thy very first being, and hadst thou died in that condition, the word is express, that *nothing undefiled nor unclean should enter into the kingdom of glory.* But here's the remedy, thy sinful conception is sanctified by Christ's holy conception: the holiness of thy Jesus serves to hide thy original pollutions from the eye of God. Oh! consider this conception thus, till thou bringest it near and close to thy soul, till thou feelest some sweetness and power coming and flowing from Jesus in the womb.

3. Consider the duplicity of natures in Jesus Christ: the Word made flesh. No sooner was he conceived, than he was God-man; he was perfectly framed, and instantly united to the eternal Word: *God sent his Son,* there is the nature divine; *made of a woman,* there is the nature human. Certainly great is this mystery, that the Word is made flesh; that the Son of God is made of a woman; that a star gives light to the sun; that a branch doth bear the vine; that a creature gives being to the Creator!

Admire, O my soul, at this! but withal consider, that all this was for us and our salvation: he was man, that he might die for us; and he was God, that his death might be sufficient to save us. Had he been man alone, not God, he might have suffered, but he could never have satisfied for sin; he could not have been Jesus, a Saviour of souls: had he been God alone, not man, he had not been akin to our nature offending; and so he could not have satisfied the justice of God in the same nature wherein it was offended; neither could he, as God alone, have died for sin; and the decree was, that our Redeemer must die for sin; *for without shedding of blood, there is no remission;* and no shedding of blood could possibly befall the godhead of Christ. O my soul, consider this in relation to thyself: he is God-man, that he might suffer and satisfy for thy sins; he is God-man, that he might be able and fit to finish the work of thy salvation. As God he is able, and as man he is fit, to discharge the office of Mediator: as God, he is able to bear the punishment of sin; and as man, he is fit to suffer for sin. Oh the wisdom of God in this! man's nature can suffer death, but not overcome it; the divine nature can overcome death and all things, but he cannot suffer it: and hence there is a duplicity of natures in

Jesus Christ. O muse on this; it is worthy thy serious consideration.

4. Consider the real distinction of these two natures in Christ. As the unapproachable light of the godhead was put into human flesh, so these two natures remained entire, without any conversion or confusion. They were not as wine and water, that become one by mixing; there is no such blending the divine and human nature: they were not as snow and water, that become one by dissolving of the snow into water; there is no such changing of the human nature into the divine, or of the divine into the human. Look, as at the first moment of his conception he was God and man, so these two natures continued distinct in substance, properties, and actions. Consider this, O my soul, in reference to thyself: by this means thou hast free access unto the throne of grace; and as thou hast free access, so thou mayest boldly draw near. His deity indeed confounds, but his humanity comforts feeble souls: his divine nature amazeth, but his human nature encourageth us to come unto him. Even after his resurrection, he was pleased to send this comfortable message to the sons of men; *Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.* Now, as long as he is not ashamed to call us brethren, God is not ashamed to be called our God. Oh, the sweet fruit that we may gather off this tree, the real distinctions of two natures in Christ! As long as Christ is man as well as God, we have a motive strong enough to appease his Father, and to turn his favourable countenance towards us. Here is our happiness, that there is one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.

5. Consider the union of the two natures of Christ in one and the same person. As he was the branch of the Lord, and the fruit of the earth, so these two natures were tied with such a knot as sin, hell, and the grave were never able to disunite: yea, though in the death of Christ there was a separation of the soul from the body, yet in that separation the hypostatical union remained unshaken. In this meditation thou hast great cause, O my soul, to admire and adore! Wonderful things are spoken of thee, O Christ! He is God, so as neither the Father nor the Holy Ghost were made flesh; and he is man, in the nature of man. This is a mystery that no angel is able to comprehend. We have not another example of such an union. If thou wilt consider this great mystery of godliness any further, review what hath been said in the object propounded, where this union is set forth more largely and particularly: but especially consider the blessed effects of this union in reference to thyself. As our nature in the person of Christ is united to the godhead, so our persons in and by this union of Christ are brought nigh to God. Hence it is that God doth set his sanctuary and tabernacle

among us, and that he dwells with us; and, which is more, that he makes us houses and habitations, wherein he himself is pleased to dwell by his holy Spirit. By reason of this hypostatical union of Christ, the Spirit of Christ is given to us in the very moment of our regeneration. *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father: and hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.* As the members of the body, howsoever distinct amongst themselves, and all differing from the head, yet by reason of one soul informing both the head and members, all make one man; so all believers in Christ, howsoever distinct persons amongst themselves, and all distinct from the person of Christ, and especially from the godhead, which is incommunicable, yet by one and the same Spirit abiding in Christ and in all his members, they become one. *There is one body, and one Spirit:—he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit.* O my soul, consider this; and in considering, believe thy part in this; and the rather because the means of this union on thy part is a true and lively faith. Faith is the first effect and instrument of the Spirit of Christ, disposing and enabling thy soul to cleave unto Christ; *and for this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ—that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.*

6. Consider the birth of Christ, who in his divine generation was the Son of God; in his human generation was born in a stable, for the saving of the children of men. Suppose the Holy Ghost came upon thee, to form and fashion thee in Jesus Christ, (thus Paul bespeaks the Galatians; *My little children, of whom I travel in birth again until Christ be formed in you,)* would not this affect? would not the whole soul be taken up with this? Come, receive Christ into thy soul; or if that work be done, if Christ be formed in thee, O cherish him! (I speak of the spiritual birth,) O keep him in thy heart! Let him there bud, and blossom, and bear fruit; let him fill thy soul with his divine graces: O that thou couldst say it feelingly, *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.* O that this were the issue of thy meditation on Christ's birth! even whilst thou art going with the shepherds to Bethlehem, and there findest thy Saviour lying in a cratch, that thou wouldst bring him thence, and make thy heart to be his cradle! I would not give a farthing for a meditation merely on the history of Christ's birth: either draw virtue from him within, or thy meditation will be fruitless.

7. Consider those few consequents after Christ's birth: every action of Christ is our instruction. Here are many particulars, but none in vain. Christ is considered under much variety of notions, but he is still sweet under all. Is it possible, O my soul, that thou shouldst tire thyself in the contemplation of Jesus Christ? If one flower yield thee not pleasure or delight,

go to a second, a third. For a while observe the circumcision of Jesus Christ, and gather some honey out of that flower. Christ had never been circumcised, but that the same might be done to our souls that was done to his body. O that the same Christ would do that in us that was done to him for us!

Again, observe Christ's presentation in the temple. This was the law of those that first opened the womb. Now Christ was the first-born of Mary, and indeed the first-born of all creatures; and he was consecrated unto God, that by him we might be consecrated and made holy, and that by him we might be accepted when we are offered unto the Lord.

Again, observe Christ's flight into Egypt: though the infancy is usually most quiet, yet here life and toil began together; and see how speedily this comes after Christ's dedication unto God. Alas! we are no sooner born again, than we are persecuted. If the church travel, and bring forth a male, she is in danger of the dragon's streams.

Again, observe Christ's return into Judea; he was *not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel;* with them alone he was personally to converse in his ministry, in which respect he was called a minister of the circumcision. And where should he be trained, and shew himself, but amongst them to whom God had sent him? The gospel first began there, and, as a preparation to it, Christ now in his childhood returns thither.

Again, observe Christ disputing with the doctors in the temple. See how early his divine graces put forth themselves; *In him were hid,* saith the apostle, *all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;* all the treasures were hid in him, and yet some of those treasures appeared very early; his wisdom in his very infancy is admired at, nor is it without our profit, for of God he is made wisdom unto us.

Again, observe how he spent the remainder of his youth. In all his examples he meant our instruction; *he went down with his parents, and was subject to them:* he was not idle bred, but serves his generation in the poor way of a carpenter. It is every way good for a man to bear God's yoke, even from his infancy. Christ is inured betimes to the hardships of life, and the strict observation of the law, both of God and nature.

See, O my soul, what a world of matter is before thee: here is the annunciation of Jesus, the conception of Jesus, the duplicity of natures in Jesus, the real distinction, the wonderful union, the nativity of Jesus, together with some consequents after it. Go over these with frequent thoughts; give not over till thou feelest thy heart warm. True meditation is as the bellows of the soul, that doth kindle and inflame holy affections; and by renewed thoughts, as by renewed and stronger blasts, it doth renew and increase the flame.

Sect. III.—*Of Desiring Jesus in that respect.*

Let us desire Jesus, carrying on the great work of our salvation at his first coming or incarnation. It is not enough to know and consider, but we must desire. Now, what is desire, but a certain motion of the appetite, by which the soul darts itself towards the absent good, purposely to draw near, and to unite itself thereunto? The incarnation of Christ, according to the letter, was the desire of all nations. O how they that lived before Christ, desired this coming of Christ! Abraham desired to see that day, two thousand years and more before it came. It was the expectation of all the patriarchs: O when will that day come! And surely the incarnation of Christ in the fruit or application, is, or should be, the desire of all Christians. There is virtue in Jesus Christ, in every passage of Christ, in his conception, incarnation, in his birth, and in those consequents after his birth. Now, to make these our's, that we may have our share and interest in them, we must here begin. O my soul, do thou desire, do thou seek to possess thyself of Christ! Set thy desire (as the needle point) aright, and all the rest will follow: never will union be with the absent good, but the soul, by desire, must first dart itself towards it. True it is, millions of souls stand at a distance from Christ; and why? they have no desire towards him: but, O that my soul, and thy soul, whosoever thou art that readest, would desire! O that we could desire and long after him until we languish, and be compelled to cry out with the spouse, *Comfort me, for I am sick of love.*

Is there not good reason for it? what is there in Christ that is not desirable? View over all those excellencies of his conception; of his two natures really distinguished, and yet wonderfully united; of his birth; of those few consequents after his birth: but above all, see the fruit of all; he was conceived, that our conceptions might be sanctified; he was the Son of man, that he might suffer for us; and the Son of God, that he might satisfy divine justice; he was God and man in one person, that we might be one with him, *members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.* He was born of the Virgin, that there might be a spiritual birth of Christ in our virgin-hearts. Are not these desirable things? Never tell me of thy present enjoyments; for never was Christ so enjoyed in this life, but thou hast cause to desire more of Christ. It is worth thy observation, that spiritual desires after Christ do neither load nor cloy the heart, but rather open and enlarge it for more and more. Who was better acquainted with God than Moses? and yet who was more importunate to know him better? *I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.* And who was more acquainted with Christ than Paul?

and yet who was more importunate to be with him nearer? *I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.* Further and further, union with Christ, and communion with Christ, are most desirable things, and are not these the fruits of his incarnation, the effects of his personal union? More and more peace, and love, and reconciliation, betwixt God and us, are desirable things: and are not these the fruits of Christ's birth? was it not then that *righteousness looked down from heaven? that mercy and truth met together, and righteousness and peace kissed each other?* An higher degree of holiness, likeness to God and Christ, are desirable things: and are not these the fruits of circumcision, and presentation to the Lord, the effects of all those consequents that follow after his birth? Come, stir up thy desires: true desires are not wavering, but resolute and full of quickness. Observe how the nature of true desire in scripture, is set forth by the most strong similitudes of hunger and thirst; and those not common neither, but by the panting of a tired *hart* after the rivers of water, and by the gaping of *dry ground* after seasonable showers. O then! how is it that the passages of thy desires are so narrow, and almost shut up? Nay, how is it that thy vessels are so full of contrary qualities, that there is scarce any room in thy soul for Christ? Will not the desires of the patriarchs witness against thee? how cried they after Christ's coming in the flesh? *Bow the heavens, O Lord, and come down,* Psal. cxliv. 5. *Oh, that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down,* Isa. xliv. 1. *Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness; let the earth open, and bring forth salvation,* Isa. xlv. 8. Is it possible that their desires should be more vehement after Christ than our's? They lived on the dark side of the cloud, but we on the bright side; the veil was upon their hearts, which veil is done away in Christ. They saw Christ afar off, and their sight was very dim; *but we all with open face, as in a glass, behold the glory of the Lord.* One would think, the less any thing is known, the less it should be desired. O my soul, either thou art more ignorant of Christ than the patriarchs of old, or thy heart is more out of frame than theirs: suspect the latter, and blame thy heart, it may be thy sluggish nature hath laid thy desires asleep. If an hungry man will sleep, his hunger will sleep with him: but, oh! stir up and awake thy desires. Present before them that glorious object, the incarnation of Jesus Christ: it is an object which the very angels desire to look into; and art not thou more concerned in it than the angels? Is not the fruit of the incarnation thine, more especially thine? Come then, stir up those motions of thy appetite, by which the soul darts itself towards the absent good. Draw nearer and nearer, till thou comest to union and enjoyment; cry after Christ, *Why is his chariot so long in coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariots?*

Sect. IV.—*Of Hoping in Jesus in that respect.*

Let us hope in Jesus, carrying on the great work of our salvation at his first coming. Only here remember, I speak not of every hope, but only of such an hope as is grounded on some certainty and knowledge. This is the main question, whether Christ's incarnation belongs unto me? The prophet tells us, that *unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.* But how may I hope that this child is born to me? and that this Son is given to me? what ground for that? Out of these words of the prophet I shall draw a double evidence, which may be instead of all: our first evidence from the former words, *unto us a child is born;* our second evidence from the latter words, *unto us a Son is given.*

1. From the former words, I lay down this position, *unto us a child is born,* if we are new-born. The surest way to know our interest in the birth of Christ, is to know Christ born in us, or *formed in us,* as the apostle speaks. The new-birth is the effect of Christ's birth, and a sure sign that Christ is born in us. Say then, O my soul, art thou born anew? is there in thee a new nature, a new principle? is the image of God and of Christ in thy soul? so the apostle styles it, the bearing of *the image of the heavenly;* then was Christ incarnate for thee. Come then, look to it, my soul; what is thy principle within? Consider not so much the outward actions, the outward duties, of religion, as that root from whence they grow, that principle from whence they come: are they fixed ones, settled ones, by way of life, in thee? Clocks have their motions, but they are not motions of life, because they have no principles of life within. Is there life within? Then art thou born again, yea, even unto thee a child is born. This is one evidence.

2. From the latter words I lay down this position, *unto us a Son is given,* if we are God's sons. The best way to know our interest in the Son of God, is to know ourselves to be God's sons by grace, as Christ was God's Son by nature.—Christians, to whom Christ is given, are co-heirs with Christ; only Christ is the first-born, and hath the pre-eminence in all things. Our sonship is an effect of Christ's Sonship, and a sure sign that unto us a son is given. Say then, O my soul, art thou a son of God? dost thou resemble God according to thy capacity, *being holy, even as he is holy?* Why then, Christ was incarnate for thee, he was given to thee. If thy sonship be not clear enough, thou by these following rules mayest try it further:—

(1.) The sons of God fear God: *If I be a Father, where is mine honour?* saith God; *if I be a master, where is my fear?* If I be a son of God, there will be an holy fear and trembling upon me in all my approaches unto God. I know there is a

servile fear, and that is unworthy and unbeseeming a son of God; but there is a filial fear, and that is an excellent check and bridle to all our wantonness. What son will not fear the frowns of his loving father? I dare not do this, (he will say,) my father will be offended. Agreeable to this is the apostle's advice, *If ye call on the Father, pass your sojourning here in fear.*

(2.) The sons of God love God, and obey God out of a principle of love. Suppose there were no heaven to bestow upon a regenerate person, yet would he obey God out of a principle of love? Not that it is unlawful for the child of God to have an eye unto the recompense of reward: Moses's reason of esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, was, for that he had respect unto the recompense of reward. He had respect; in the original, he had a fixed intent eye: there was in him a love of the reward, and yet withal a love of God; and therefore his love of the reward was not mercenary: but this, I say, though there were no reward at all, a child of God hath such a principle of love within him, that for love's sake he would obey his God. He is led by the Spirit, and therefore he obeys: now the Spirit that leads him is a spirit of love, and as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God.

(3.) The sons of God imitate God in his love and goodness to all men. Our Saviour amplifies this excellent property of God: *he causeth his sun to shine on the good and the bad.* And thence he concludeth, *be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.* Goodness to bad men, is as it were the perfection of all. Oh! my soul, canst thou imitate God in this? Consider how thy Father bears it, though the wicked provoke him day by day, yet for all that he doth not quickly revenge. God seeth all; and for all that, he doth not make the earth presently to gape and devour us: he puts not out the glorious light of the sun, he doth not dissolve the work of creation, he doth not for man's sin presently blast every thing into dust: what an excellent pattern is this for thee to write after! Canst thou forgive thy enemies? do well to them that do evil to thee? This is a sure sign of grace and sonship. It is storied of some heathens, who beating a Christian almost to death, asked him, 'What great matter did Christ ever do for him?' "Even this," said the Christian, "that I can forgive you, though you use me thus." Here was a child of God indeed! It is a sweet resemblance of our Father, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, to *love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, to do good unto them that hate us, to pray for them that despitefully use us, and persecute us.* Oh! my soul, look to this, consult this ground of hope; if this law be written in thy heart, write it down amongst the evidences that thou art God's son, yea, that even unto thee a Son is given.

To review the grounds :—What ! is a child born to me ? and a Son given to me ? What ! am I new born ? am I indeed God's son or daughter ? Do I upon search find in my soul new desires, new comforts, new contentments ? Are my words, my works, and affections, and conversation, new ? Is there in me a new nature, a new principle ? Hath the Spirit given me a new power, a seed of spiritual life, which I had not before ? Do I upon search find that I fear God, and love God, and imitate God in his love and goodness towards all men ? Can I really forgive an enemy, and according to my ability do good unto them that do evil unto me ? Why should I not then confidently and comfortably hope, that I have my interest in the birth of Christ, in the blessed incarnation and conception of Jesus Christ ? Away, all despair and dejection. If these be my grounds of hope, it is mine to hold up my head, and heart, and hands, and all with cheerfulness and confidence, and to say with the spouse, *I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine.*

Sect. V.—*Of Believing in Jesus in that respect.*

Let us believe in Jesus, carrying on the great work of our great salvation at his first coming or incarnation. I know many staggerings are oft in Christians, 'What ! is it likely that Christ should be incarnate for me ? that God should do such a thing, for such a sinful abominable wretch as I am ?' Ah ! poor soul, put thy property in Christ's incarnation out of dispute, that thou mayest be able to say, 'As God was manifest in the flesh, and I may not doubt it ; so God is manifest in me, and I dare not deny it.'

To help the soul in this, I shall, 1. propose the hinderances of faith. 2. The helps of faith in this respect. 3. The manner how to act our faith. 4. The encouragements to bring on the soul to believe its part in the blessed incarnation of Jesus Christ.

For the first, there are but three things that can hinder faith ;

(1.) The exceeding unworthiness of the soul ; and to this purpose are those complaints, 'What ! Christ incarnate for me ? for such a dead dog as I am ? I am less than the least of all God's mercies ; I am fitter for hell and devils, than for union and communion with God and Christ ; I dare not, I cannot believe.

2. The infinite exactness of divine justice, which must be satisfied. A soul deeply considering of this, startles, and cries, Oh ! what will become of my soul ? One of the least sins that I stand guilty of, deserves death, and eternal wrath : the wages of sin is death ; and I cannot satisfy. Though I have trespassed many millions of talents, I have not one mite to pay. Oh ! then how should I believe ? What thoughts can I entertain of God's

mercy and love to me? God's law condemns me, my own conscience accuseth me, and justice will have its due.

(3.) The want of a mediator, or some suitable person which may stand between the sinner and God. If on my part there be unworthiness, and on God's part severe justice; and withal I see no mediator, which I may go unto, before I deal with the infinite glory of God himself; how should I but despair, and cry out, Oh wretched man that I am! Oh that I never had been! I cannot believe; there is no room for faith in this case.

2. The helps of faith, in this sad condition, are these:

(1.) A consideration that God is pleased to overlook the unworthiness of his poor creatures. This we see plain in the very act of his incarnation; himself disdains not to be as his poor creatures, to wear their flesh, to take upon him human nature; and in all things to become like unto man, sin only excepted.

(2.) A consideration that God satisfies justice, by setting up Christ, who is justice itself. Now was it that mercy and truth met together, and righteousness and peace kissed each other; now was it that free grace and merit, that fulness and nothingness, were made one; now was it that truth ran to mercy, and embraced her; and righteousness to peace, and kissed her; in Christ they met, yea, in him was the infinite exactness of God's justice satisfied.

(3.) A consideration that God hath set up Christ as a Mediator; that he was incarnate in order to reconciliation, and salvation of souls; and but for the accomplishment of this design, Christ had never been incarnate. The very end of his uniting flesh unto him, was in order to the reconciliation of us poor souls. Alas! we had sinned, and by sin deserved everlasting damnation; but to save us, and to satisfy himself, God takes our nature and joins it to his Son, and calls that Christ a Saviour. This is the gospel notion of Christ; for what is Christ but God himself in our nature, transacting our peace? In this Christ is fulness, and righteousness, and love, and bowels to receive the first acts of our faith; and to have immediate union and communion with us. Indeed we pitch our faith immediately on God himself; yet at last we come to him, and our faith lives in God, as one faith, before it is aware, through the intervention of that person, which is God himself, only called by another name—the Lord Jesus Christ: and these are the helps of faith, in reference to our unworthiness, God's justice, and the want of a Mediator betwixt God and us.

3. The manner how to act our faith on Christ incarnate, is this:

(1.) Faith must directly go to Christ. We find indeed some particular promises of this and that grace; but the promises are not given without Christ: no, first Christ, and then all other things. *Incline your ears, and come unto me*: Come unto

Christ, and then *I will make an everlasting covenant*, (which contains all the promises) *even the sure mercies of David.* As in marriage, the woman first consents to have the man, and then all the benefits that follow; so the soul by faith first pitcheth upon Christ, and then on the privileges that flow from Christ. Say, dost thou want any temporal blessing; suppose it be the payment of debts, thy daily bread, health; look through the scripture for promises of these things, and let thy faith act thus, 'If God hath given me Christ, the greatest blessing, then certainly he will give me all these things, so far as they may be for my good. In the twenty-third psalm we find a bundle of promises; but he begins, *The Lord is my shepherd, therefore I shall not want.* The believing patriarchs through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, did wonders in the world; but what did they chiefly look to in this their faith? Surely to the promise to come, and to that better thing, Christ himself: and therefore the apostle concludes, *having such a cloud of witnesses*, that thus lived and died by faith, *let us look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.*

(2.) Faith must directly go to Christ as God in our flesh. Some think it a carnal apprehension of Jesus Christ, to know him as in flesh: I confess, to know him only so; to consider Jesus no other way but as having flesh, is no better than a carnal apprehension; but to consider Christ as God in flesh, and to consider that flesh as acted by God, and filled with God, is a true and spiritual apprehension of Jesus Christ; and hither is faith to be directed immediately. Suppose a case of danger by some enemies, and I find a promise of protection from my enemies; I look on that: but in the first place thus I argue, If the Lord hath given me Christ, (God in the flesh) to save me from hell, then much more will he save me from these fleshly enemies.

(3.) Faith must go and lie at the feet of Christ; faith must fasten itself on this God in our flesh. Some go to Christ, and look on Jesus with loose and transient glances, they have but coarse and common apprehensions of Jesus Christ. Oh! but we should come to Christ with solemn and serious spirits; we should look on Jesus piercingly, till we see him as God is in him, and as such a person thus and thus qualified from heaven; we should labour to apprehend what is the riches of this glorious mystery of Christ's incarnation; we should dive into the depths of his glorious actings; we should study this mystery above all other studies. Nothing is more pleasant, and nothing is more deep. That one person should be God and man; that blessedness should be made a curse; that heaven should be let down into hell; that the God of the world should shut himself up, as it were, in a body; that the invisible God should be made visible to sense; that God should make our nature, which had sinned

against him, to be the great ordinance of reconciling us unto himself; that God should take our flesh, and dwell in it with all his fulness, and make that flesh more glorious than the angels, and advance that flesh into oneness with himself, and through that flesh open all his rich discoveries of love and free grace unto the sons of men; that this God-man should be our Saviour, Redeemer, Reconciler, Father, Friend; Oh what mysteries are these! No wonder, if when Christ was born, the apostles cry, *We saw his glory, as of the only begotten Son of God;* noting, that at the first sight of him, so much glory sparkled from him as could appear from none, but a God walking up and down the world. Oh! my soul, let not such a treasury be unlooked into. Set faith on work with a redoubled strength. Surely we live not like men under this great design, if our eye of faith be not firmly and stedfastly set on this. Oh, that we were but acquainted with these lively discoveries! how blessedly might we live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave himself for us.

(4.) Faith must look principally to the end of Christ, as God coming in the flesh. Now what was the design of Christ in this? The apostle answers, Rom. viii. 3. *God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, to condemn sin in the flesh,* i. e. God the Father sent into the world his only begotten Son, to abolish in the first place original sin. Mark these two words: he *condemned sin in the flesh.* The first word *condemned,* is, by a metonymy, put for that which follows condemnation, namely, for the abolishing of sin; as condemned persons use to be cut off and to be taken out of the world, that they may be no more; so Christ hath condemned or abolished this sin. By the second word, *in the flesh,* is meant the human nature which Christ assumed. He abolished sin altogether in his own nature: and that flesh of his being perfectly holy, and the holiness of it being imputed unto us, it takes away our guilt in respect of the impureness of our nature also. Christ had not the least spot of original sin; and if we are Christ's, then is the sin in some measure taken out of their hearts. But howsoever the filth of this sin may remain in part, yet the guilt is removed: in this respect the purity of Christ's human nature is no less reckoned to us for the curing of our defiled nature, than the sufferings of Christ are to us, for the remission of our actual sins. O my soul, look to this end of Christ as God in the flesh. If thou consider him as made of flesh and blood, think withal, that his meaning was to condemn sin in our flesh. There flows from the holiness of Christ's nature such a power as countermands the power of our original sin, and acquits and discharges from the condemnation of the same sin. Not only the death and life, but also the conception and birth, of Christ, hath its influence in our justification.

4. The encouragements to bring our souls to believe on Christ incarnate, we may draw—

(1.) From the excellency of this object. This incarnation of Christ is the foundation of all other actings of God for us; it is the very hinge on which all turn; it is the cabinet wherein all the designs of God do lie, redemption, justification, glorification, all are wrapt up in it; it is the highest pitch of the declaration of God's wisdom, goodness, power, and glory. Oh, what a sweet object of faith is this! I know there are some other things in Christ, which are most proper for some acts of faith; as, Christ dying is most proper for the pardon of actual sin; and Christ rising from the dead, is most proper for the evidencing of our justification; but the strongest and purest acts of faith are those which take in Christ as such a person, laid out in all this glory. Christ's incarnation is more general than Christ's passion or Christ's resurrection, and, as some would have it, includes all. Christ's incarnation holds forth Christ in his fulness, and so is the complete subject of our faith.

Come, poor soul, thy eyes are running to and fro the world, to find comfort and happiness on earth: O cast thy eyes back, and see heaven and earth in one object! Look fixedly on Christ incarnate! There is more in this than in all the variety of this world, or of that world to come. Here is an object of faith, and love, and joy, and delight; here is a compendium of all glories.

(2.) From the suitableness of this object. Christ incarnate is most suitable for our faith to act upon. We are indeed to believe on God, but we cannot come to God but in and through Christ. Alas! God is offended, and therefore we cannot find ground immediately to go to God. Hence you heard, that faith must directly go to Christ as God in our flesh. O the infinite condescension of God in Christ! God takes up our nature, and joins it to himself as one person, and lays that before our faith; so that here is God, and God suited to the particular state of the sinner. Now with what boldness may our souls draw nigh to God! Why art thou strange, poor soul? Why standest thou afar off, as if it were death to draw nigh? Of whom art thou afraid? Is God come down amongst men, and canst thou not see him, lest thou die and perish? Oh, look once more, and be not discouraged! See, God is not come down in fire. God is not descended in the armour of justice and everlasting burnings; no, he is clothed with the garments of flesh, he desires to converse with thee after thy own form, he is come down to beseech thee to see with thine own eyes thy eternal happiness. Oh, the wonder of heaven! It is the cry of some poor souls, O that I might see God! Lo here God is come down in the likeness of man, he walks in our own shape amongst us. It is the cry of others, O that I might have my heart united to God! Why, he is come,

down on this very purpose, and hath united our nature unto himself. Surely God hath left all the world without excuse: O that ever there should be an heart of unbelief, after these sensible demonstrations of divine glory and love! Why wilt thou now stand off? Tell me, what wouldst thou have God do more? Can he manifest himself in a more suitable way to thy condition? Is there any thing below flesh, wherein the great God can humble himself for thy good? Come, think of another and a better way, or else for ever believe. Methinks it is sad to see believers shy in their approaches to God, or doubtful of their acceptance with God, when God himself stoops first, and is so in love with our acquaintance, that he will be of the same nature that we are. Oh! let not such a rock of strength be slighted, but every day entertain precious thoughts of Christ being incarnate: inure thy heart to believing on this Jesus, as he carries on the great work of thy salvation at his first coming.

(3.) From the offers of this blessed object to our souls. As Christ is come in our nature to satisfy, so he comes in the gospel freely and fully to offer the terms of love; therein are set out the most alluring expressions that possibly can be; therein is set out, that this incarnation of Christ was God's own acting, out of his own love, and grace, and glory; therein is set out the birth, and life, and death of Christ; and this he could not do but he must be incarnate: God takes our flesh, and he useth that as an instrument whereby to act; he was flesh to suffer, as he was spirit to satisfy, for our sins. Methinks I might challenge unbelief, and bid it come forth; let it appear, if it dare, before this consideration: what, is not God incarnate, enough to satisfy thy conscience? Come nigh, hear the voice of Christ inviting: *Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden* with sin. And, Oh! let these rich and glorious openings of the heart of Christ overcome thy heart. What if God should have done no more than this! Had he only looked down from heaven, and hearing sinners cry out, O wo, wo unto us for ever! we have broken God's law, incurred the penalty, damned our own souls; O who should deliver us? Who will save us from the wrath to come? In this case, if God hearing sinners thus crying out; had he, I say, only looked down and told them, I will pardon your sins; I made the law, and will dispense with it; fear not, I have the keys of life and death: what soul would not have been raised up, even from the bottom of hell at this very voice? I know a poor soul would have scrupled at this, and have said, What then should become of infinite justice? But, to remove all controversies, God hath not only spoken from heaven, but he himself is come down from heaven to speak unto us. O see this miracle of mercy! God is come down in flesh, he is come down as a price; he himself will pay himself according to all the demands

of his justice; and all this done, now he offers and tenders himself to thy soul.

O my soul, why shouldst thou fear to cast thyself upon thy God? I know thy objection of vileness: notwithstanding all thy vileness, God himself offers himself to lead thee by the hand, and to remove all doubts; God himself hath put a price sufficient in the hands of justice; or if yet thou fearest to come to God, why come then to thy own flesh; go to Christ, as having thy own nature; it is he that calls thee. What can be said more to draw on thy trembling heart! If God himself, and God so fitted and qualified, as I may say, will not allure, must not men die and perish in unbelief? What! O my soul, is God come down so low to thee? and dost thou now stand questioning whether thou shouldst go or come to him? What is this but to say, All that God is, or does, or says, is too little to persuade me to faith? I cannot tell; but one would think that unbelief should be strangled, quite slain, upon this consideration. All this, O my soul, thou hearest in the gospel: there is Christ incarnate set forth to the life; there is Christ suing thy love, and offering himself as thy beloved in thy own nature; there it is written, that God is come down in flesh, with an olive branch of eternal peace in his hand, and bids you all be witness he is not come to destroy, but to save. Oh that this encouragement might be of force to improve Christ's glorious design to the supplying of all thy wants, and to the making up of all thy losses! Believe, Oh, believe thy part in Christ incarnate.

Sect. VI.—*Of Loving Jesus in that respect.*

Let us love Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation at his first coming or incarnation. O my soul, canst thou possibly light on any object more attractive than the incarnation of Jesus Christ? If love be the loadstone of love, what an attractive is this before thee! Methinks the very sight of Christ incarnate is enough to ravish thee with the apprehension of his infinite goodness. See how he calls out, or, as it were, draws out the soul to union, vision, and participation of his glory! O come and yield thyself up unto him: give him thyself, and conform all thy affections and actions to his will. O love him, not with a divided, but with all thy heart.

But to excite this love, I shall only propound the object, which will be argument enough. Love causeth love: now as God's first love to man was in making man like himself, so his second great love was in making himself like to man. Stay then a while upon this love; for I take it, this is the greater love of the two. The evangelist expresseth it thus, *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son;* he gave him to be

incarnate, to be made flesh, and to suffer death; but the extension of his love lies in that expression, *he so loved.* So! how? why, so fully, so freely, as no tongue can tell, no heart can think.

It is usually said, that it is a greater love of God to save a soul, than to make a world; and I think it was a greater love of God to take our nature, than simply to save our souls: for a king to dispense with the law, and by his own prerogative to save a murderer from the gallows, is not such an act of love and mercy as to take the murderer's clothes, and to wear them as his richest livery? Why, God in taking our nature, hath done thus, and more than thus: he would not save us by his mere prerogative, but he takes our clothes, our flesh, and in that flesh he personates us, and in that flesh he will die for us, that we might not die, but live through him for evermore. Surely this was love, that God will be no more God, as it were, simply, but he will take up another nature, rather than the brightness of his glory shall undo our souls.

It will not be amiss (whilst I am endeavouring to draw a line of God's love in Christ from first to last in saving souls) that here we look back a little, and summarily contract the passages of love from that eternity before all worlds unto this present.

1. God had an eternal design to discover his infinite love to some besides himself. Oh, the wonder of this! Was there any necessity of such a discovery? Though God was one, and in that respect alone, yet God was not solitary; in that eternity within his own essence there were three divine Persons, and betwixt them there was a blessed communication of love. Though in that eternity their was no creature to whom these three persons could communicate their love; yet was there a glorious communication and breaking out of love from one to another. Before there was a world, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost did infinitely glorify themselves, *John* xvii. 5. What need then was there of the discovery of God's love to any one besides himself? only thus was the pleasure of God; *Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.* Such was the love of God, that it would not contain itself within that infinite ocean of himself, but it would needs have rivers and channels, into which it might run and overflow.

2. God, in prosecution of his design, creates a world of creatures; some rational, and only capable of love; others irrational, and serviceable to that one creature, which he makes the top of the whole creation; then it was that he set one man, Adam, as a common person, to represent the rest; to him he gives abundance of glorious qualifications, and him he sets over all the work of his hands. If we should view the excellency of this creature, either in the outward or inner man, who would not wonder? His body had its excellency, which made the psalmist

say, *I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth,* Psalm cxxxix. 14. It is a speech borrowed from those who work arras-work: the body of man is a piece of curious tapestry, consisting of skin, bones, muscles, sinews, and the like. What a goodly thing the body of man was before the fall, may be guessed from the excellent gifts found in the bodies of some men since the fall. If all these were but joined in one, as certainly they were in Adam, what a rare body would such a one be? But what was this body in comparison of that soul? The soul was it that was especially made after the image of God: the soul was it that was tempered in the same mortar with the heavenly spirits: the soul was God's sparkle, a beam of his divine glory, a ray or emanation of God himself: as man was the principal part of the creation, so the soul was the principal part of man. Here was it that God's love and glory were centred. Here was it that God's love fixed itself in a special manner, whence flowed that communion of God with Adam, and that familiarity of Adam with God.

3. Within a while, this man, the object of God's love, fell away from God, and as he fell, so all that were in him, even the whole world, fell together with him; and hereupon God's face was hid. Not a sight of him but in flaming fire, ready to seize on the sons of men. And yet God's love would not thus leave the object: he had yet a further reach of love, and out of this dark cloud he lets fall some glimpses of another discovery: these glimpses were sweet; but, alas! they were so dark that very few could make any comfortable application of them; but by degrees God hints it out more, he points it out by types and shadows, he makes some model of it by outward ceremonies, and yet so dark, that in four thousand years men were but guessing and hoping through promises for a manifestation of God's love. This is the meaning of the apostle, who tells us of *the mystery that was hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints.* This love of God was hid in the breast of God from the sons of men for an age, so that they knew not what to make of this great design: I speak of the generality of men; for in respect of some particulars, the Lord made his love clear to them; and still the nearer to Christ, the clearer and clearer was the covenant of grace.

4. At last, God fully opens himself; in the fulness of time, God takes the flesh of those poor sinners which he had so loved, and joins it to himself, and calls it Christ, a Saviour Now was it that God descended, and lay in the womb of a virgin; now was it that he is born as we are born; now was it that he joined our flesh so nigh to himself, as that there is a communication of properties betwixt them both; that being attributed to God which is proper to flesh, as to be born, to suffer; and that being

attributed to flesh which is proper to God, as to create, to redeem. Who can choose but wonder, that God should be made flesh, and dwell amongst us? that flesh should infinitely provoke God, and yet God, in the same flesh, should be infinitely pleased? that God should veil himself, and darken his glory with our flesh, and yet unveil at the same time the deepest and darkest of his designs in a comfortable way to our souls? O my soul! how shouldst thou contain thyself within thyself? how shouldst thou but leap out of thyself, if I may so speak, as one that is lost in the admiration of this love? Surely God never manifested himself in such a strain of love as this before.

Well, hitherto we have followed the passages of his love, and now we see it at full-sea. If any thing will beget our love to God, surely Christ incarnate will do it. Come then, O my soul, I cannot but call on thee to love thy Jesus; and to provoke thy love, fix thy eye on this lovely object. Draw yet a little nearer; consider what an heart of love is in this design: God is in thy own nature, to take upon him all the miseries of thy nature.

Oh! my heart, art thou yet cold in thy love to Jesus Christ? Canst thou love him but a little, who hath loved thee so much? How should I then but complain of thee to Christ! and for thy sake beg hard of God: O thou sweet Jesus, that clothest thyself with the clouds as with a garment, and now clothest thyself with the nature of a man; Oh! that nothing but thyself might be dear unto me, because it so pleased thee to vilify thyself for my sake.

Sect. VII.—*Of Joying in Jesus in that respect.*

Let us joy in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation for us at his incarnation. If it be so, that by our desire, and hope, and faith, and love, we have reached the object which our souls pant after, how should we but joy and delight therein? The end of our motion is to attain quiet and rest; now what is joy, but a sweet and delightful tranquillity of mind, resting in the fruition of good? What! hast thou in some measure attained the fruition of Christ, as God incarnate, in thy soul? It is then time to joy in Jesus; it is then time to keep a sabbath of thy thoughts, and to be quiet and calm in thy spirit. But you will say, how should this be before we come to heaven? I answer, there is not indeed perfection of joy whilst we are here, because there is no perfection of union on this side heaven; but so far as union is, our joy must be. Examine the grounds of thy hope, and the actings of thy faith, and if thou art but satisfied in them, then lead up thy joy; here is matter for it to work upon: if thou canst rejoice in any thing, rejoice in the Lord; and again I say, rejoice.

Is there not cause? What is the meaning of the gospel of Christ? What is gospel, but good spell, or good tidings? And wherein lies the good tidings, according to its eminency? Is it not in the glorious incarnation of the Son of God? 'Behold, I bring you a gospel,' so it is in the original; or, *behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.* The birth of Christ is the comfort of comforts, and the sweetest balm that ever was. O my soul, what ails thee? Why art thou cast down and disquieted within me? Is it because thou art a sinner? Why, unto thee is born a Saviour; his name is Saviour, and therefore Saviour, because he will save his people from their sins. Come then, and bring out thy sins, and weigh them to the utmost aggravation, and take in every circumstance both of law and gospel, and set but this in the other scale, that unto thee is born a Saviour; surely all thy iniquities will seem lighter than vanity, yea, they will be as nothing in comparison thereof: *My soul doth magnify the Lord,* said Mary, *and my spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour.* Her soul and her spirit within her rejoiced at this birth of Christ. There is cause that every soul and every spirit should rejoice, that hath any interest in this birth of Christ. O my soul, how shouldst thou but rejoice, if thou wilt consider these particulars:

1. God himself is come down into the world. Because it was impossible for thee to come to him, he is come to thee. This consideration made the prophet cry out, *Rejoice greatly, O thou daughter of Zion, shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy King cometh unto thee:* he is called a King, and therefore he is able; and he is thy King, and therefore he is willing: but in that thy King cometh unto thee, here is the marvellous love of God in Christ. Kings do not usually come to wait upon their subjects; it is well if poor subjects may come to them. Oh! but see the great King of heaven and earth, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, stooping, and bowing the heavens, come down to thee! Surely this is good tidings of great joy, and therefore rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!

2. God is come down in flesh. He hath laid aside, as it were, his own glory, whilst he converseth with thee. When God manifested himself on mount Sinai, he came down in thunder and lightning; and if now he had appeared in thunder and lightning, if now he had been guarded with an innumerable company of angels, all having their swords of justice drawn, well might poor souls have trembled, and have run into corners; for who could ever be able to endure his coming in this way? But God is come down in flesh, he hath made his appearance as a man, as one of us, and there is not in this regard the least distance betwixt him and us; surely this is fuel for joy to feed upon. O

why should God come down so suitably, so lowly, as in our nature, if he would have thy poor soul to be afraid of him? Doth not this very design intend consolation to thy soul? O gather up thy spirit, anoint thy heart with the oil of gladness. See, God himself is come down in flesh to live amongst us! he professeth he will have no other life but amongst the sons of men. See what a sweet way of familiarity and intercourse is made betwixt God and us.

3. God hath taken on him our nature, that his godhead may flow out in all manner of sweetness upon our hearts. If God had come down in flesh, only to have been seen of us, it had been a wonderful condescension: *If I have found favour in thy eyes*, said Moses, *shew me the way that I may know thee:* but to come down in flesh, not only to be seen, but to dispatch the great business of our soul's salvation, here is comfort indeed: with what joy should we draw water out of this well of salvation.

O my soul, thou art daily busy in eyeing this and that; but above all know, that the fulness of God lies in Christ incarnate, to be emptied upon thee. This was the meaning of Christ's taking upon him flesh, that through his flesh he might convey to thee whatsoever is in himself as God. As for instance, God in himself is good, and gracious, and powerful, and all-sufficient, and merciful, and what not? Now by his being in flesh, he conveys all this to thee. Observe this for thy eternal comfort; God in and through the flesh makes all his attributes and glory serviceable to thy soul.

4. This discovering Christ incarnate is the first opening of all God's heart and glory unto the sons of men: and from this we may raise a world of comfort; for if God begins so gloriously, how will he end? If God be so full of love, as to come down in flesh now in this world, Oh what matter of hope is laid up before us, of what God will be to us in that world to come? If the glory of God be let out to our souls so fully at first, what glorious openings of all the glory of God will be let out to our souls at last? Christians! what do you think will God do with us, or bring us unto, when we shall be with him in heaven! You see now he is manifested in flesh, and he hath laid out a world of glory in that: but the apostle tells us of another manifestation, for we *shall see him as he is;* he shall at last be manifest in himself: *Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part, but then we shall know even as we are known.*

O my soul, weigh all these passages, and make an application of them to thyself; and then tell me if yet thou hast not matter enough to raise up thy heart, and fill it with joy unspeakable and full of glory. When the wise men saw but the star of Christ, they rejoiced with an exceeding great joy; how much

more when they saw Christ himself? *Your father Abraham,* said Christ to the Jews, *rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad.* He saw it indeed but afar off, with the eyes of faith; they before Christ had the promise, but we see the performance: how then should we rejoice! How glad shouldst thou be, O my soul, at the sight of Christ's incarnation? If the angels of God, yea, if the multitudes of angels, could sing for joy at his birth, *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will towards men;* how much more shouldst thou, whom it concerns more than the angels, join with them in concert, and sing for joy this joyful song, of good will towards men? Awake, awake, O my soul, awake, awake, utter a song! tell over these passages, that God is come down into the world; that God is come down in flesh; in order to thy reconciliation; that God is come down in the likeness of man, that he may bring thee up into the likeness of God; and that all these are but the first openings of the grace, and goodness, and glory, of God in Christ unto thy soul: and Oh, what work will these make in thy soul, if the Spirit come in, who is the Comforter!

Sect. VIII.—*Of Calling on Jesus as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation in his Birth.*

Let us call on Jesus, or on God the Father in and through Jesus. Now this calling on Jesus contains prayer and praise. 1. We must pray that all these transactions of Jesus at his first coming may be our's; and is not here encouragement for our prayers? This very point of Christ's incarnation opens a door of rich entrance into the presence of God: we may call it a blessed portal into heaven. This is that new and living way *which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.* With what boldness may we now enter into the holiest, and draw near unto the throne of grace! Why, Christ is incarnate, God is come down in the flesh; though his deity may confound us, if we should immediately and solely apply ourselves unto it, yet his humanity comforts our faint and feeble souls. God in his humility animates our souls to come unto him, and to seek of him whatsoever is needful for us. Go then to Christ; away, away, O my soul, to Jesus, or to God the Father in and through Jesus, and desire that the fruit, the benefit, of his conception, birth, and of the wonderful union of the two natures of Christ, may be all thine. What! dost thou hope in Jesus, and believe thy part in this incarnation of Christ? Why then, pray in hope, and pray in faith. What is prayer but the stream and river of faith, an issue of the desire of that which I joyfully believe? Thou, O Lord God of hosts, God of Israel, hast

revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house, therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee.

2. We must praise. This was the special duty practised by all saints and angels at Christ's birth; *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,* said Zachary, *for he hath visited and redeemed his people.*—And, *Glory to God in the highest,* said the heavenly host: only one angel had before brought the news, *Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord;* but immediately after there were many to sing praises; not only six cherubims, as Isaiah saw; not only four and twenty elders, as John saw; but a multitude of angels, like armies, that by their hallelujahs gave glory to God. O my soul, do thou keep concert with those angels: O sing praises! sing praises. Never was the like case since the first creation; never was the wisdom, truth, justice, mercy, and goodness of God so manifest before. I shall never forget that last speech of a dying saint, "Blessed be God for Jesus Christ!" O my soul, living and dying, let this be thought on; What! Christ incarnate for me? Why *bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name*

Sect. IX.—*Of Conforming to Jesus in that respect.*

Let us conform to Jesus, in reference to this great transaction of his incarnation. Looking to Jesus is the cause of this; the sight of God will make us like to God, and the sight of Christ will make us like to Christ; for as a looking-glass cannot be exposed to the sun, but it will shine like the same, so God receives none to contemplate his face, but he transforms them into his own likeness; and Christ hath none that dive into these depths of his glorious incarnation, but they carry along with them sweet impressions of an abiding and transforming nature. Come then, let us once more look on Jesus in his incarnation, that we may conform to Jesus in that respect.

But wherein lies this conformity to Jesus? I answer, in these and the like particulars:

1. Christ was conceived in Mary by the Holy Ghost; so must Christ be conceived in us by the same Holy Ghost. To this purpose is the seed of the word cast in, and principles of grace are by the Holy Ghost infused; *he hath begotten us by the word,* saith the apostle, *James* i. 18. God hath appointed no other means to convey supernatural life, but after this manner. Where no preaching is, there is a worse judgment than that of Egypt, where there was one dead in every family. By the word and spirit the seeds of all grace are sown in the heart, and the heart closing with it, Christ is conceived in the heart.

2. Christ was sanctified in the Virgin's womb; so must we be sanctified in ourselves: *Be ye holy as I am holy.* Souls regenerate must be sanctified: *Every man,* saith the apostle, *that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure.* I know our hearts are, as it were, seas of corruptions, yet we must daily cleanse them. Christ could not have been a Saviour for us, unless first he had been sanctified; neither can we be fit members unto him, unless we be purged from our sins, and sanctified by his Spirit. To this purpose is that of the apostle; *I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.* In the Old Testament they did kill beasts, presenting them unto the Lord; now we are to mortify the flesh with the affections and lusts; all our inordinate passions, all our evil affections of anger, love, joy, hatred, are to be crucified, and all that is our's must be given up to God: there must be no love in us but of God, and in reference to God; no joy in us, but in God, and in reference to God; no fear in us, but of God, and in reference to God; and thus of all other the like passions. O that we would look to Jesus, and be like unto Jesus in this thing! if there be any honour, any happiness, it is in this: we are not fit for any holy duty, or any religious approach unto God, without sanctification; *This is the will of God,* saith the apostle, *even your sanctification.* All the commands of God tend to this; and for the comfort of us Christians, we have, under the gospel, promises of sanctification to be in a larger measure made out unto us: *In that day there shall be upon the bells of the horses, Holiness unto the Lord;—yea, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord.* Every vessel under Christ and the gospel must have written upon it *Holiness to the Lord:* thus our spiritual services, figured by the ancient ceremonial services of the Jewish dispensation, are set out by a larger measure of holiness than was in former times.

3. Christ the Son of man, is by nature the son of God; so we, poor sons of men, must, by grace, become the sons of God, even of the same God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: *For this end God sent his own Son, made of a woman, that we might receive the adoption of sons.—Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.* This intimates, that what relation Christ hath unto the Father by nature, we should have the same by grace: by nature, *he is the only begotten Son of the Father;—and as many as received him,* saith the apostle John, *to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.*

4. Christ the Son of God was yet the son of man: there was in him a duplicity of natures really distinguished; and in this respect the greatest majesty, and the greatest humility, that ever

was, are found in Christ: so we, though sons of God, must remember ourselves to be but sons of men: and our privileges are not so high, but our poor conditions, frailties, infirmities, sins, may make us low. Who was higher than the son of God? and who was lower than the son of man? As he is God, he is in the bosom of his Father; as he is man, he is in the womb of his mother: as he is God, his throne is in heaven, and he fills all things by his immensity; as he is man, he is circumcised in a manger. Well, *let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself:* he that thought it no robbery to be equal with God, humbled himself to become man. We should have found it no robbery to be equal with devils, and are we too proud to learn of God? What an intolerable disproportion is this, to behold an humbled God, and a proud man! Shall the son of God be thus humbled for us, and shall not we be humbled for ourselves? I say, for ourselves, that deserve to be cast down among the lowest worms. What are we in our best condition on earth? Had we the best natures, purest conversations, happiest endowments, pride overthrows all; it thrust Nebuchadnezzar out of Babel, proud Saul out of his kingdom, proud Lucifer out of heaven. Poor man! how ill it becomes thee to be proud, when God himself is become thus humble! *Learn of me,* saith Christ, *for I am meek and lowly in spirit, and you shall find rest unto your souls.*

5. The two natures of Christ, though really distinguished, yet were inseparably joined; so must our natures, though at great distance from God, be inseparably joined to Christ, and thereby to God. *I pray,* saith Christ, *that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.* That union of Christ's two natures, we call an hypostatical union; and this union of Christ with us, we call a mystical and spiritual union; yet though it be mystical and spiritual, this hinders not but that it is a true, real union, whereby the believer is united to the Son of God. O what a privilege is this; a poor believer, be he never so mean a man or miserable in the eye of the world, yet is one with Christ, as Christ is one with the Father. *Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* Every saint is Christ's fellow; there is a kind of proportion between Christ and his saints in every thing; if we take a view of all Christ, what he is in his person, in his glory, in his spirit, in his graces, in his Father's love, and in the access he hath to the Father, in all these we are, in a sort, fellows with Christ; only with this difference, that Christ hath the pre-eminence in all things: all comes from the Father, first to Christ;

Christ by his union hath all good things without measure, but we by our union have them only in measure, as it pleaseth him to distribute. But herein if we resemble Christ, whether in his union with the Father, or in his union of the two natures in one person of a Mediator, if by looking on Christ, we come to this likeness, to be one with Christ, O what a privilege is this! Had we not good warrant for so high a challenge, it could be no less than a blasphemous arrogance to lay claim to the royal blood of heaven; but the Lord is pleased to dignify a poor worm, that every believer may truly say, I am one with Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ is one with me.

Nay, yet more, my sufferings are Christ's, *Col.* i. 24. and Christ's sufferings are mine, *Rom.* viii. 17. I am in Christ an heir of glory, *Rom.* viii. 17. O my Christ, my life, what am I, or what is my father's house, that thou shouldst come down into me? that thou shouldst be conceived in my poor sinful heart, that thou shouldst give my soul a new, a spiritual life, a life begun in grace, and ending in eternal glory! I shall not reckon up any more privileges of this union. Methinks I should not need. If I tell you of grace and glory, what can I more? Glory is the highest pitch, and Christ tells you concerning it, *The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one.* Ah, my brethren, to be so like Christ, as to be one with Christ, it is near indeed! O let us conform to Christ in this: he is one with our nature in an hypostatical, personal union; let us be one with him in a spiritual, holy, and mystical union. If God be not in our persons as truly, though not as fully as in our nature, we have no particular comfort from this design of his personal, hypostatical, and wonderful union.

6. When Christ was born, all Jerusalem was troubled; so when this new birth is, we must look that much commotion and much division of heart will be. The devil could not be cast out of the possessed person, but he would tear and torment him. We cannot expect that Christ should expel Satan from the dominion he hath over us, but he will be sure to put us to great fear and terror. Besides, not only the evil spirit, but God's Spirit is for a while a spirit of bondage. There are many pretenders to the grace of God in Christ, but they cannot abide to hear of any pains in this new birth. Oh, this is legal! But I pray thee tell me, dost thou know any woman bring forth in her sleep, or in a dream, without feeling any pain? And how then should the heart of man be thus changed and moulded without several pangs and troubles; *in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children:* so it is, and must be, in our spiritual birth; there is usually (I will not say always, to such or such a degree) many pangs and troubles, there is many a throb, and many a heart-ache, ere Christ can be formed in us.

7. Christ after his birth did and suffered many things in his childhood; so should we learn to bear God's yoke in our youth. O ye parents, do your duties, and in that respect imitate Joseph and Mary in their care of the holy child Jesus: and O ye children, do your duties, and imitate Jesus, the blessedest pattern that ever was, that as you grow in stature, you also might grow in favour with God and man.

Thus far we have looked on Jesus, as our Jesus in his incarnation. Our next work is to look on Jesus carrying on the great work of man's salvation during his life, from John's baptism until his dying on the cross.

LOOKING UNTO JESUS,

IN HIS LIFE.

BOOK IV.

1 John i. 2.

For the life was manifested, and we have seen it.

CHAP. I.

Sect. I.—*Of the Beginning of the Gospel.*

In this piece, as in the former, we must first lay down the object, and then direct you how to look to it.

The object is Jesus carrying on the work of man's salvation during the time of his life.—Now in all the transactions of this time, we shall observe them as they were carried on successively in those three years and a half of his ministerial office.

For the first year, the evangelist Mark begins thus: *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God;* q. d. the beginning of that age of the world, which the prophets pointed out for the time of good things to come; or the beginning of the completion of that gospel, which, in respect of the promise, was from the beginning of the world.

That now was the beginning of the gospel, appears, in that baptism (which was only used among the Jews, for the admission of heathens to their church,) is now proposed to the Jews themselves; shewing, that now they were to be transplanted into a

new profession; that the Gentiles and they were now to be knit into one church and body. Indeed the doctrine of John was of a different strain from the literal doctrine of the law, in the sense of the Jews; for that called all for works, *do this and live:* but John called for repentance, and for the renewing of the mind, and for belief in him that was coming after, disclaiming all righteousness by the works of the law.

Hence one observes that the evangelist Luke points out this year in a special manner; it was the "fifteenth year of Tiberius Cæsar; at which time," said he, "Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, Philip was tetrarch of Iturea, Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, and Annas and Caiaphas were high-priests. And then, even then, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness." See how exact the evangelist is, that so remarkable a year of the beginning of the gospel might be made known to all the world. I shall begin the first year of Christ's life with the beginning of John's preaching, which was six months current before the ministry of Christ.

Sect. II.—*Of the Preaching of John Baptist.*

Now was it that the gospel began to dawn; and John, like the morning star springing from the windows of the east, foretells the approach of the Sun of righteousness: now was it that he laid the first rough stone of the building in mortification, self-denial, and doing violence to our natural affections. I read not that ever John wrought a miracle, but good works convince more than miracles themselves. To this purpose, I suppose, John the Baptist spent his time in prayer, meditation, and colloquies with God, eating flies and wild honey in the wilderness, that he might be made a fit instrument of preparation of the gospel of Christ.

John's sermons were to those of Jesus as a preface to a discourse:—

His usual note was repentance, the axe to the root, the fan to the floor, the chaff to the fire. As his raiment was rough, so was his tongue; and thus must the way be made for Christ, in obstinate hearts. Plausibility, or pleasing of the flesh, is no fit preface to regeneration. If the heart of man had continued upright, Christ might have been entertained without contradiction; but now violence must be offered to our corruptions, ere we can make room for grace. If the great way-maker do not cast down hills and raise up valleys in the bosoms of men, there is no passage for Christ; never will Christ come into that soul, where the herald of repentance, either in one motive or other, hath not been before him.

Shall we hear that sermon that John preached, in his own

words? *Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* These are the words when he first began to preach the gospel of Christ; and indeed we find Christ himself doth preach the same doctrine, in the same words: *Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

O how seasonable is this sermon to Christians! Hath not the kingdom of heaven approached unto us? Take the kingdom of heaven for the kingdom of glory, are we not near to the door of glory, to the confines of eternity? What is our life, but a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and after it vanisheth away? We know not but ere the sun have run one round, our souls may be in that world of souls, and so either in heaven or hell.—Or take the kingdom of heaven for the church of Christ, and what expectation have we now of the flourishing state of Christ's church here upon earth? *Then shall the children of Israel and of Judah be gathered together, for great shall be the day of Jezreel,* Hos. i. 11. A time is at hand, that Israel and Judah shall be called together, that the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in; and what is this but the great day of Jezreel? Then what manner of persons ought we to be; how spiritual, how heavenly-minded! Arise, arise, shake off thy dust, for thy light is coming, and the glory of the Lord is rising upon thee.—But I will not dwell on this; my design is to consider of Jesus, and of the transactions of Jesus in reference to our souls' health: now, John's sermons were only a preparative to the manifestation of Jesus.

Sect. III.—*Of the Baptism of Jesus.*

He that formerly was circumcised, would now be baptized; he was circumcised to sanctify his church that was, and he was baptized to sanctify his church that should be; we find him in both testaments opening a way into heaven. This was the first appearing of Christ in reference to his ministerial office; he that lay hid in the counsel of God from all eternity, and he that lay hid in the womb of his mother for the space of forty weeks, and he that lay hid in Nazareth for the space of thirty years, now at last begins to shew himself to the world: he comes from Galilee to Jordan, to John, to be baptized of him. Now was the full time come that Jesus took leave of his mother and his trade, to begin his Father's work, in order to the redemption of the world.—For the clearer understanding of Christ's baptism, we shall examine these particulars:

1. What reason had Christ to be baptized?
2. How was it that John knew him to be Christ?
3. Why was it that the Holy Ghost descended on Jesus?

1. What reason had Christ to be baptized? We find John himself wondering at this; *I have need to be baptized of thee,*

and comest thou to me? Many reasons are given for Christ's baptism: (1.) That he might bear witness to the preaching and baptism of John, and might reciprocally receive a testimony from John. (2.) That by his own baptism, he might sanctify the water of baptism to his own church. (3.) That he might fulfil all righteousness; not only the moral, but the figurative, ceremonial, and typical. Some think, that the ceremony which our Saviour looked at in these words, was their washing of the priests in water, when they entered into their function: *And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water.* And surely this was the main reason of Christ's being baptized, that by this baptism he might be installed into his ministerial office.

2. How did John know him to be Christ? the Baptist speaks expressly, *I knew him not, but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, On whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and abiding on him, the same is he that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.* Now, this descent of the Holy Ghost was not till after baptism; how then did he know him to be Christ?

It is not unlikely but John knew Christ at his first arrival by revelation. Thus Samuel knew Saul; and thus John might know Christ. That knowledge he had after baptism, was a further confirmation of that knowledge that he had before baptism, and that not so much for his own sake, as for the people's; *I saw, and bare record, that this is the Son of God.*

3. Why was it that the Holy Ghost descended on Jesus? I answer, For these reasons, 1. That John the Baptist might be satisfied; for this token was given John, when he first began to preach, That upon whom he should see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. (2.) That Christ himself might be anointed or installed to his function: *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek.* As Aaron and his sons were anointed with material oil, when they entered into their offices; so Christ was by the Spirit (as it were) anointed, that so he might receive this consecration and institution for the office that he was to enter on, viz. the preaching and ministry of the gospel.

4. Why in the form of a dove, rather than some other form? —Perhaps,

(1.) To shew Christ's innocency, purity, and love. (2.) To answer the figure in Noah's flood; for as a dove at that time brought tidings of the abating of the waters, so now it brings tidings of the abating of God's wrath, upon the preaching of the gospel.

Observe, the baptism we use, and the baptism of John, are in nature and substance one and the same. 1. John preached the

baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins. They have therefore the same doctrine, and the same promise. 2. The baptism ministered by John pertained to the fulfilling of all righteousness. And Luke testifies, that the publicans and people being baptized of John, they justified God. But the Pharisees despised the counsel of God against themselves, and were not baptized. Only herein lies the difference, that John baptized in Christ that should die and rise again; but we baptize in the name of Christ that is dead, and risen again. It is a difference in respect of circumstance, but not of the substance: Oh, take heed of throwing away the baptism of water, upon the pretence of baptism only with fire! Christ, we see, hath joined them together, and let no man separate them asunder: Christ himself was baptized with fire: and yet Christ himself was baptized with water.

Sect. IV.—*Of the Fasting and Temptation of Christ.*

No sooner is Christ come out of the water of baptism, but he enters into the fire of temptation. No sooner is the Holy Spirit descended upon his head, but he is led by the same Holy Spirit to be tempted in the wilderness. No sooner doth God say, *This is my Son;* but Satan puts it to the question, *If thou be the Son of God?* All these are but Christ's preparatives to his prophetical office. In the former, Christ was prepared by a solemn consecration; now he is further prepared by Satan's temptation. In the same method as the evangelist lays it down, Matt. iv. 1—12. I shall proceed. *Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil.* In the whole, we may observe these several branches: First, the place where the temptation was, the wilderness; Secondly, the cause of Christ's going into the wilderness, the Spirit's leading; Thirdly, the end of the Spirit's leading Christ into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil; Fourthly, the time and occasion of the devil's onset, at the end of forty days' fast, and when he was an hungered; Fifthly, the temptations themselves, which are in number, three; to which are added as many victories, which Christ had over the tempter; who therefore *left him, and so the angels came and ministered unto him.*—I shall begin first with the place where the temptation was; to wit, in the wilderness.

This wilderness was not that same wilderness, or not that same place of the wilderness, wherein John Baptist lived, *Matt.* iii. 1. for that wherein John Baptist lived, was a place inhabited. There was in that place cities and towns, and a number of people to whom John preached; but this wilderness was devoid of men, full of wild beasts. So saith Mark—*He was tempted of Satan, and was with the wild beasts.* As Adam, in his innocency, lived with wild beasts, and they hurt him not; so Christ,

the second Adam, lives here in a wilderness with wild beasts, and has no hurt at all. He is Adam-like in his safety and security; above Adam in the resisting of temptation. Probably, during his forty days' abode, Christ was continually exercised in prayer and fasting: but he knew he had the great work of redemption to promote; and therefore his conversation for this interval must be preparatory to it; in this respect, I know not but the wilderness might be an advantage to Christ's design: in this solitary place he could not but breathe out more pure inspiration. Heaven usually is more open, and God usually is more familiar in his visits, to such places.

2. The cause of Christ's going into the wilderness, was, the Spirit's leading: *Then was Jesus led of the Spirit into the wilderness.* Christ was led by the good Spirit, to be tempted by the evil spirit: O wonder! that same Spirit which was one with the Father and the Son, that same Spirit whereby Christ was conceived, now drives him or leads him into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. Christ himself would not go into the combat uncalled, unwarranted; how then should we poor weaklings presume upon any abilities of our own! Who dares grapple with the devil in his own strength? Oh, take heed! If we are to pray not to be led into temptation, much more are we to pray not to run into temptation before we are led: and yet for the comfort of God's people, if it be so that we are led—if by divine permission, or by an inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we are engaged in an action, or in a course of life, that is full of temptations—let us look upon it as an issue of divine providence, in which we must glorify God.

3. The end of the Spirit's leading Christ into the wilderness, was either immediate, or remote. 1. The immediate end was, to be tempted of the devil: to this purpose was Christ brought thither, that Satan might tempt him. One would think it a very strange design, that the Son of God should be brought into a wilderness to be set on by all the devils in hell; but in this also, God had another remote end, *i. e.* his own glory and our good. 1. His own glory appeared in this; had not Satan tempted Christ, how should Christ have overcome Satan? Herein was the power of Christ exceedingly manifested: the devil having the chain let loose, lets fly at Christ with all his might; and Christ both overcomes him, and triumphs over him. And herein were the graces of Christ exceedingly manifested: how was the faith, patience, humility, zeal, and valour of Christ set forth; which they could not have been, if he had always lain quietly in garrison, and never had come into the skirmish? (2.) As it was for his glory, so also for our good. Now we see what manner of adversary we have, how he fights, and how he is resisted, and how overcome; now we see, the dearer we are to God, the more obnoxious we are to temptation; now we see that the best of

saints may be tempted or allured to the worst of evils, since Christ himself is solicited to infidelity, covetousness, and idolatry: now we see that we have not an High-priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but such a one as was in all things tempted in like sort, yet without sin; and therefore we may go boldly to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and find grace in time of need.

4. The time and occasion of the devil's onset; it was *at the end of forty days' fast, and when he was an hungered.* Moses fasted forty days at the delivery of the law; and Elias fasted forty days at the restitution of the law; and to fulfil the time of both these types, Christ thinks it fit to fast forty days at the accomplishment of the law, and the promulgation of the gospel. In fasting so long, Christ manifests his almighty power; and in fasting no longer, Christ manifests the truth of his manhood, and of his weakness: to shew that he was man as well as God, and so a fit Mediator betwixt God and man, he would both feed and fast; make use of the creature, and withal fulfil hunger.—And now our Saviour is an hungered. This gives occasion to Satan to set upon him with his fierce temptations. He knows well what baits to fish withal, and when and how to lay them. He considers the temper and constitution of the person he is to tempt. And he observes all exterior accidents, occasions, and opportunities.

5. The temptations themselves are in number three; whereof the first was this: *If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.* What an horrible entrance is this: *If thou be the Son of God!* No question, Satan had heard the glad tidings of the angel; he saw the star, and the journey and the offerings of the sages; he could not but take notice of the gratulations of Zachary, Simeon, and Anna. And of late, he saw the heavens open, and heard the voice that came down from heaven: *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* And yet, now that he saw Christ fainting with hunger, as not comprehending how infirmities could consist with a godhead, he puts it to the question, *If thou be the Son of God.* Here is a point in which lies all our happiness: how miserable were we, if Christ were not indeed the Son of God? Satan strikes at the root, in this supposition: surely, all the work of our redemption, and all the work of our salvation, depends upon this, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. If Christ had not been the Son of God, how should he have ransomed the world? How should he have done, or how should he have suffered, that which was satisfactory to his Father's wrath? If Christ be not the Son of God, we are all gone; we are lost, we are undone, we are damned for ever. Farewell glory, farewell happiness, farewell heaven. If Christ be not the Son of God, we must never come there. Well, Satan, thou beginnest thy assault like a devil

indeed: *If thou be the Son of God;* but what then? *Command that these stones be made bread.* He knew Jesus was hungry; and therefore, he invites him to eat bread only of his own providing, that so he might refresh his humanity, and prove his divinity. There is nothing more ordinary with our spiritual enemy, than, by occasion of want, to move us to unwarrantable courses: if thou art poor, then steal; if thou canst not rise by honest means, then use indirect means. I know Christ might as lawfully have turned stones into bread, as he turned water into wine; but to do this in a distrust of his Father's providence, to work a miracle of Satan's choice, and at Satan's bidding, it could not be agreeable with the Son of God. And hence Jesus refuseth to be relieved; he would rather deny to manifest the divinity of his person, than he would do any act which had in it the intimation of a different spirit. O Christians! it is a sinful care to take evil courses to provide for our necessities. Come, it may be thou hast found a way to thrive, which thou couldst not do before. O take heed; was it not of the devil's prompting, to change stones into bread? sadness, into sensual comforts? If so, then Satan hath prevailed: alas, he cannot endure thou shouldst live a life of austerity, or self-denial, or mortification; if he can but get thee to satisfy thy senses, and to please thy natural desires, he then hath a fair field for the battle. It were a thousand times better for us to make stones our meat, and tears our drink, than to swim in our ill-gotten goods, and in the fulness of voluptuousness.

But what was Christ's answer? *It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

1. It is written. He easily could have confounded Satan by the power of his godhead; but he rather chuses to vanquish him by the sword of the Spirit. Surely this was for our instruction. By this means he teacheth us how to resist, and to overcome. Nothing in heaven or earth can beat the forces of hell, if the word of God cannot do it: O then, how should we pray with David, *Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes—and take not from me the words of truth; let them be my songs in the house of my pilgrimage—so shall I make answer to my blasphemers.*

2. Man shall not live by bread. Whilst we are in God's work, God hath made us a promise of the supply of all provisions necessary for us. Jesus was now in his Father's work, therefore he was sure to be provided for, according to God's word. Christians! are we in God's service? God will certainly give us bread; and till he does, we can live by the breath of his mouth, by the light of his countenance, by the refreshment of his promises, by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Every word of God's mouth can create a grace, and every grace

can supply two necessities, both of the body, and of the spirit. I remember one kept straitly in prison, and sorely threatened with famine: he replied, "That if he must have no bread, God would so provide that he should have no stomach." If our stock be spent, God can lessen our necessities: if a tyrant will take away our meat, God our Father knows how to alter our faint, and feeble, and hungry appetites.

The second temptation is not so sensual; the devil sees that was too low for Christ, and therefore he comes again with a temptation something more spiritual: *He sets him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written, he shall give his angels charge concerning thee.* He that was content to be led from Jordan into the wilderness, yields to be led from the wilderness to Jerusalem. The wilderness was fit for a temptation arising from want, and Jerusalem for a temptation arising from vain-glory.

Methinks it is a sweet contemplation of an holy divine; he supposed as if he had seen Christ on the highest battlements of the temple, and Satan standing by him with this speech in his mouth: 'Well then, since in the matter of nourishment thou wilt needs depend upon thy Father's providence; take now a further trial of that providence, in thy miraculous preservation: cast thyself from this height; and if thou be God, now the eyes of all men are fixed upon thee, there cannot be devised a more ready way to spread thy glory, and to proclaim thy deity: and for danger, if thou art the Son of God, there can be none; what can hurt him that is the Son of God?' Come, cast thyself down, saith Satan: but why did not Satan cast him down? He carried him up thither; and was it not more easy to throw him down thence? O no, the devil may persuade us to a fall, but he cannot precipitate us without our own act; his malice is infinite, but his power is limited: he cannot do us any harm, but by persuading us to do it ourselves; and therefore saith he to Christ, *Cast thyself down.*

To this Christ answers, *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* Though it is true, that God must be trusted in, yet he must not be tempted; if means be allowed, we must not throw them away upon a pretence of God's protection. Christ knew well enough that there were ordinary descents by stairs from the top of the temple, and therefore he would not so tempt God as to throw himself headlong. All the devils in hell could not so tempt Christ, as to make him tempt his God.

The third temptation is yet more horrid; the temple was not high enough, so that Satan takes him up to the top of an exceeding high mountain, and shews him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, saying, *All these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.* In this temptation the devil united all his power; by an angelical power he drew into

one centre all the kingdoms and glories of the world, and made an admirable map of beauties, and represented them to the eyes of Jesus: he thought ambition more likely to ruin him, because he knew it was that which prevailed upon himself; therefore, *Come*, saith Satan, *all these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.* How! God worship the devil? Was ever the like blasphemy since the creation? The Lamb of God, that heard all the former with patience, could by no means endure this: he commands him away, and tells him, *It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* Now was the devil put to flight, and, in his stead, the angels came and ministered unto Jesus; *i. e.* after his fast they minister such things as his necessities required.

O Christians! what shall we say to this? If Christ was thus tempted by Satan, what may we look for? Sometimes it cheers my heart to think that Christ was tempted, because thereby he knows how to succour those that are tempted; and sometimes it affrights my soul to think that Satan durst be so bold with Jesus Christ. Oh what may he do with me! how easily may he prevail against my soul! When he came to tempt Christ, he found nothing in him to join with him in the temptation; but in my heart is a world of corruptions, and, unless the Lord prevent, I am quickly gone.

Sect. V.—*Of the First Manifestation of Christ.*

To manifest Christ were many witnesses. As, 1. From heaven the Father is witness: *For see*, saith Christ, *the Father that sent me, beareth witness of me:* and the Son is witness; for so saith Christ, *I am one that bear witness of myself; and though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true, for I know whence I came, and whither I go:* and the Holy Ghost is witness; so saith Paul, *The Holy Ghost also is a witness to us;* and to that purpose he descended like a dove, and lighted upon him. 2. On earth, John the Baptist is witness; for so saith Christ: *Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth; he came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through Christ might believe.* No sooner was John confirmed by a sign from heaven that Jesus was the Christ, but he immediately manifests it to the Jews, and first to the priests and Levites sent from the Sanhedrim; and secondly, to all the people he professeth, wheresoever he saw Jesus Christ, *This is he;* yea, he points him out with his finger, *Behold the Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world.* Then he shews him to Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, and then to another disciple with him, *who both followed Jesus, and abode with him all night.* Andrew brings his brother Simon with him. Then Jesus himself finds out Philip of Bethsaida, and bade him follow him; and Philip

finds out Nathanael, and bids him come and see, for the Messiah was found. Thus we see no less than five disciples found out at first, which must be so many witnesses of Jesus Christ.

And yet we find more witnesses: *The works*, saith Christ, *that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.* These works or miracles of Christ were many; but because we are speaking of his first manifestation, I shall instance only in his first work, which was at a marriage in Cana of Galilee. The power of miracles had now ceased since their return out of captivity; the last miracle that was done by man until this very time, was Daniel tying up the mouths of the lions; and now Christ begins. He that made the first marriage in paradise, bestows his first miracle upon a marriage-feast. O happy feast where Christ is a guest! I believe this was no rich or sumptuous bridal: who ever found Christ at the magnificent feasts or triumphs of the great? The poor bridegroom wants drink for his guests; and as soon as the holy virgin hath notice of it, she complains to her son:—whether we want bread or wine, necessaries or comforts, whither should we go but to Christ? *But Jesus answered her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come.* This shews, that the work he was to do must not be done to satisfy her importunity, but to prosecute the great work. In works spiritual and religious, all outward relation ceaseth: matters of miracle concerned the godhead only; and in this case, *O woman, what have I to do with thee?* We must not deny love and duty to relations; but in the things of God, natural endearments must pass into spiritual; and like stars in the presence of the sun, must not appear. Paul could say, *Henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.*

At the command of Jesus, the water-pots were filled with water, and the water by his divine power is turned into wine; where the different dispensation of God and the world is highly observable: *Every man sets forth good wine at first, and then the worse:* but Christ not only turns water into wine, but into such wine that at the last draught is most pleasant. These were the first manifestations of Jesus; you see he had several witnesses to set him forth; some from heaven, and some on earth: the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost witness from heaven; the Baptist, disciples, and his works, witness on earth; and there's no disagreement in their witness, but all bring in this testimony of Jesus, that he is the Messiah; that is, being interpreted, the Christ.

But what are those manifestations to us? or to that great design of Christ in carrying on our souls' salvation? Much every way. For either must Christ be manifested to us even by these witnesses, in the preaching of the gospel, and manifested in us

by that one witness, his Holy Spirit, or we are undone for ever.

1. Christ must be manifested to us in the preaching of the gospel. This mercy we have this day; nay, you see every sabbath-day all the witnesses speak in us. What do we, but in God's stead, in the Baptist's stead, in the disciples' stead, manifest Christ to you in every sermon! It is the commission which Christ hath given us of the ministry; *Go, preach the gospel to every creature.*

2. Christ must be manifested in us by his Holy Spirit. Christians! look to your hearts; what manifestations of Christ are there? When Paul speaks of the gospel in general, he adds in particular, *that it pleased God to reveal Christ in me.* And when Peter speaks of the word of God, he adds, *That we take heed thereunto—until the day dawn, and the day-star* (that is, Christ, Rev. xxii. 16.) *arise in your hearts:* until then, though we be circled with gospel-discoveries, our hearts will be full of darkness; but when Christ, (whom the prophet calls, *The Sun of Righteousness,* and Peter, *The Day-star,*) shall arise within us, we shall be full of light.

Sect. VI.—*Of Christ's Whipping the Buyers and Sellers out of the Temple.*

Concerning Christ's whipping the buyers and sellers out of the temple, we read in the gospel, that *the Jews' passover being at hand, Jesus went up to Jerusalem:* thither, if we follow him, the first place that we find him in, is the temple; where, by the occasion of the national assembly, was an opportune scene for Christ's transactions. In that temple Christ first espies a mart; there were divers merchants and exchangers of money, that brought beasts thither to be sold for sacrifice against that great solemnity; at the sight of which Jesus being moved with indignation, makes a whip of cords, and drives them all out of the temple, overthrows the accounting tables, and commands them that sold the doves, to take them from thence.

Sometimes I wonder at the irreverent carriage of some hearers; laughing, talking, prating, sleeping, in our congregations: what! is this a demeanour beseeming the presence of Christ? Wouldst thou carry thyself thus in the presence of a prince, or of some earthly majesty; "If thou goest but into a king's palace," as Chrysostom speaks, "thou composest thyself to a comeliness in thy habit, look, gait, and all thy guise; and dost thou laugh?" I may add, dost thou any way carry thyself undecently in God's presence? Some there are, that in the very midst of ordinances the devil usually rocks them asleep: but O! dost thou not fear that thy damnation sleeps not? How justly might Christ come against thee in his wrath, and whip thee out of the

temple into hell? Surely we should do well to behave ourselves in such a presence with the thoughts of heaven about us; our business here is an errand of religion, and God himself is the object of our worship: how then should our actions bear at least some degrees of proportion to God and Christ?

And now was the first passover after Christ's baptism.—This was the first year of Christ's ministry: whereof the one half was carried on by his forerunner, John the Baptist; and the other half (betwixt his baptism and this first passover) was carried on by himself. And now hath Christ three years to his death. I shall come on to the second year, and to his actings therein in reference to our salvation.

CHAP. II.

Sect. I.—*Of the Second Year of Christ's Ministry.*

Now was it that the office of the Baptist was expired; and Christ beginning his prophetical office, he appears like the sun in succession of the morning-star; he preacheth the sum of the gospel, faith and repentance: *Repent ye, and believe the gospel,* Mark i. 15. Now, what this gospel was, the sum and series of all his following sermons expressed.

By this time Jesus saw it convenient to chuse more disciples: with this family he goes up and down Galilee, *preaching the gospel of the kingdom, healing all manner of diseases.*

It is not my purpose to enlarge on all the sermons, miracles, or colloquies of Christ with men: in this year, therefore, I shall limit myself to the consideration of Christ in these two particulars:—1. His preaching. 2. His miracles: both these relate to the exercise of his prophetical office.

Sect. II.—*Of Christ's Sermons this Year.*

1. His preaching this year was frequent; and, amongst others, now it was that he delivered his first sermon, *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

2. Now was it that he delivered that spiritual and mystical sermon of regeneration, at which Nicodemus wonders; *How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born?* But Jesus takes off the wonder, in telling him, this was not a work of flesh and blood, but of the Spirit of God; for *the Spirit bloweth where it listeth,* and is as the wind, certain and notorious in the effects, but secret in the principle and manner of production.

3. Now was it that the throng of auditors forced Christ to leave the shore. Whilst he was upon land, he healed the sick bodies by his touch; and now he was upon sea, he cured the sick souls by his doctrine: he that made both sea and land, causeth both to conspire to the doing good to the souls and bodies of men.

4. Now it was that he preached that blessed sermon on that text, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor.* No question but he preached both to poor and rich, Christ preached to all; but for the power and fruit of his preaching, it was only received by the poor in spirit. In the following particulars, his office is set out still in an higher tenor: *To heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind;* or, as it is in Isaiah, lxi. 1. *the opening of the prison to them that are bound.* A sad thing to be in captivity, but sadder to be bound in chains, or locked up in a prison there; but 'tis most sad of all to be imprisoned, having one's eyes put out, as was the case of Samson and Zedekiah. Now the evangelist, willing to render the prophet to the highest sense that might be, useth an expression that meets with the highest mystery; that is, when a man is not only shut up in a prison, but himself also hath his eyes put out: to such Christ should preach, not only deliverance to the captives, but also recovering of sight to blinded persons.

5. Now it was that he delivered the admirable sermon, called, The sermon on the mount. It is a breviary of all those precepts which are truly called christian; it contains in it all the moral precepts given by Moses, and a more severe exposition than the Scribes and Pharisees had given; it holds forth the doctrines of meekness, poverty of spirit, christian mourning, desire of holy things, mercy and purity, peace and patience, and suffering of injuries; he teacheth us how to pray, how to fast, how to give alms, how to contemn the world, and how to seek the kingdom of God and its appendant righteousness.

And thus Christ being entered upon his prophetical office; in these and the rest of his sermons he gives a clear testimony, that he was not only an interpreter of the law, but a law-giver; and that this law of Christ might retain some proportion at least with the law of Moses, Christ, in his last sermon, went up into a mountain, and from thence gave the oracle. I cannot stand to paraphrase on this, or any other of his sermons; but seeing now we find Christ in the exercise of his prophetical office, let us observe, first, his titles in this respect. 2. The reasons of his being a prophet. 3. The excellency of Christ above all other prophets.

Sect. III.—*Of Christ's Prophetical Office.*

1. The titles of Christ in respect of his prophetical office, were these; 1. Sometimes he is called Doctor, or Master: *Be ye not called masters, for one is your Master, even Christ.* The word in the original signifies a doctor, moderator, teaching-master, a guide of the way. 2. Sometimes he is called a Law-giver: *There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and destroy.* The apostle speaks of the internal government of the conscience, in which case the Lord is our judge. 3. Sometimes he is called a Counsellor; *and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor:—Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom,* saith Christ; *I am understanding, and I have strength.* 4. Sometimes he is called the Apostle of our profession: *Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High-priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.* God sent him as an ambassador, to make known his will; he came not unsent: the very word imports a mission, a sending; *How shall they preach, except they be sent?* 5. Sometimes he is called the Angel of the covenant: *even the Angel of the covenant, whom ye delight in.* Christ was the publisher of the gospel covenant; and in this respect he is called a Prophet, Acts iii. 22. whose office it was to impart God's will unto the sons of men, according unto the name, angel. 6. Sometimes he is called the Mediator of the new covenant: *For this cause he is the Mediator of the new testament,* saith the apostle. Now, a mediator is such a one as goes betwixt two parties at variance, imparting the mind of the one to the other, so as to breed a right understanding, and thereby to work a compliance betwixt both: and thus Christ is a Mediator betwixt God and us, an Interpreter, an inter-messenger betwixt God and his people.

2. The reasons of Christ's being a Prophet, were these:—1. That he might reveal to his people the will of his Father. 2. That he might open and expound the same, being once delivered. 3. That he might make saints understand and believe the same.

(1.) As a Prophet, he delivers to the people his Father's will, both in his own person, and by his servants the ministers: in his own person, when he was upon earth, as a minister of the circumcision; and by his servants the ministers, from the beginning of their mission until the end of the world.

(2.) As a Prophet, he opens and expounds the gospel. Thus, being in the synagogue on the sabbath-day, he *opened the book, and found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, &c.* and then he closed the book, and said, *This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.* The gracious purpose

of God towards lost mankind, was a secret locked up in the breast of the Father; and so it had been even to this day, had not Christ, who was in the bosom of the Father, revealed it unto us: hence Christ is called the interpreter of God: no man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him, by his interpretation.

(3.) As a Prophet, he gives us to understand and to believe the gospel. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures; and thus was the case of Lydia, whose heart the Lord opened. He that first opens scriptures, at last opens hearts; he is that true light *which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world.* He enlightens every man that cometh into the world. He enlightens every believer, not only with a common natural light, but with a special supernatural light, of saving, spiritual, and effectual knowledge. Now there is no prophet can do this, save only Jesus Christ; he only is able to cause our hearts to believe and to understand the matter which he doth teach and reveal: other prophets may plant and water; *Paul may plant, and Apollos may water,* but he, and he only, can *give the increase.*

3. The excellencies of Christ, above all other prophets, are in these respects:

(1.) Other prophets were but types and shadows of this great Prophet; even Moses himself was but a figure of him: *A Prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me,* saith Moses. These words, *like unto me,* plainly shew that Moses was but an image and shadow of Christ. Now as substances far excel shadows, so doth Christ far excel all the prophets.

(2.) Other prophets revealed but some part of God's will, and only at some times. *God,* saith the apostle, *at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets;* i. e. he let out his light by little and little, till the Day-star and Sun of righteousness arose; *but in these last days he hath spoken by his Son,* i. e. he hath spoken more fully and plainly; in this respect, saith the apostle, the heirs of life and salvation were but children before Christ's incarnation.—As now we see but through a glass darkly, towards what we shall do in the life to come; so did they of old in comparison of us; their light, in comparison of ours, was but an obscure and glimmering light.

(3.) Other prophets speak only to the ears of men, but Christ spake, and still speaks, to the heart: *He hath the keys of David, that openeth and no man shutteth, that shutteth, and no man openeth;* it is a similitude taken from them that keep the keys of a city or castle, without whom none can open or shut; no more can any man open the heart, or break in upon the spirit, but Christ; he only is able to open the eyes of the

mind by the secret, kindly, and powerful working of his own Spirit.

(4.) Other prophets had their commission and authority from him: *The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of the assemblies, which are given from one shepherd;* i. e. The words of the wise are divine and heavenly instructions; the masters of assemblies are gospel-ministers; and Christ is that one shepherd, from whom these words are given, and from whom these masters have their authority.

Sect. IV.—*Of Christ's Miracles.*

1. The miracles of Christ this year were many: now what were these miracles but a pursuance of the doctrines delivered in Christ's sermons? One calls them, "a verification of Christ's doctrine, a signal of Christ's sermons." If we observe, we shall find him to work most of his miracles in actions of mercy: indeed once he turned water into wine, and sometimes he walked upon the waters; but all the rest were actions of relief, according to the design of God, who would have him manifest his power in shewing mercy to men.

(1.) Amongst all his miracles done this year, now was that at Cana, where he wrought the first miracle. He does a second; *A certain nobleman*, or courtier, *came to Jesus, and besought him to come down to his house, and to heal his son, who was at the point of death.* We do not find Christ often attended with nobility; but here he is. This noble ruler listens after Christ in his necessity: happy was it for him that his son was sick, for else he had not been so well acquainted with his Saviour. The first answer Christ gives, is a word of reproof; *Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.* Incredulity was the common disease of the Jews, which no receipt could cure but wonders: *A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign.* The doctrine of Christ, and all the words that he spake, must be made up with miracles, or they will not believe. O what a sin is this! Christ's next answer is a word of comfort: *go thy way, thy son liveth.* O the meekness and mercy of Jesus Christ! When we would have looked that he should have punished this suitor for not believing, he condescends to him that he may believe: *go thy way, thy son liveth.* With one word doth Christ heal two patients, the son and the father; the son's fever, and the father's unbelief. We cannot but observe here the steps of faith, he that believed somewhat ere he came, and more when he went, grew to more faith in the way, and when he came home he enlarged his faith to all the skirts of his family. *And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way;* and in the way one meets him and tells him, *thy son liveth;* which recovery he understands to be at the same time

that Christ had spoken those healing words, and *himself believed, and his whole house.*

(2.) Now was it that a *centurion came unto Christ, beseeching him, and saying, My servant lieth at home, sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.* Many suitors come to Christ, one for a son, another for a daughter, a third for himself, but I see none come for his servant but this one centurion; and if we observe Christ's answers to his suit, we see how well pleased Christ is with his request: *And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.* He is no respecter of persons, but he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him. It may be this servant had more grace, or he had more need, and therefore Christ will go down to visit this poor sick servant. Nay, says the centurion, *I am not worthy, Lord, that thou shouldest come under my roof:* q. d. Alas, Lord, I am a Gentile, an alien, a man of blood, but thou art holy, thou art omnipotent; and therefore *only say the word, and my servant shall be whole.* The centurion knew this by the command he had over his own servants: *I say to this man, go, and he goes; and to another, come, and he comes; and to a third, do this, and he doth it.* Oh that I were such a servant to my heavenly Master! Alas! every of his commands says, do this, and I do it not: every of his inhibitions say, do it not, and I do it. He says, Go from the world, and I run to it. He says, Come to me, and I run from him. Wo is me! this is not service, but enmity: Oh that I could come up to the faith and obedience of this exemplar, that I could serve my Christ as these soldiers did their master! Jesus marvels at the centurion's faith. We never find Christ wondering at gold, or silver, or costly and curious works; but when he sees the acts of faith, he so approves of them that he is ravished with wonder. And he that both wrought this faith, and wondered at it, doth now reward it: *Go thy way, and as thou hast believed, so be it unto thee; and his servant was healed in the self-same hour.*

(3.) Now it was, even *the day after, that Jesus goes into the city of Nain.* The fruitful clouds are not ordained to fall all in one field; Nain must partake of the bounty of Christ, as well as Cana or Capernaum. He no sooner enters the gate, but he meets a funeral; a poor widow, with her weeping friends, is following her only son to the grave; Jesus observing her sad condition, he pities her, comforts her, and at last relieves her: here was no solicitor but his own compassion. In his former miracles he was sued to; but now Christ offers a cure, to give us a lesson, that "whilst we have to do with the Father of mercies, our miseries and afflictions are the most powerful suitors." Christ sees and observes the widow's sadness, and presently speaks comfortably to her. *Weep not: and he said, Young man, I say unto thee, arise.* See how the Lord of life speaks with com-

mand; the same voice speaks to him, that shall one day speak to us, and raise us out of the dust of the earth. So at the sound of the last trumpet, by the power of the same voice, we shall arise out of the dust, and stand up gloriously: *This mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption.* And lest our weak faith should stagger at so great a difficulty, by this he hath done, Christ gives us a taste of what he will do; the same power that can raise one man, can raise a world.

(4.) Now it was that in the synagogue he finds *a man that had a spirit of an unclean devil.* This, I take it, is the first man that we read of as possessed with a devil: *And he cried, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee? &c.* In these words the devil dictates, the man speaks; and whereas the words are plural, *let us alone,* it is probable he speaks of himself, and the rest of the men in the synagogue with him. So high and dreadful things are spoken concerning the coming of Christ, (Mal. iii. 2. *Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?)* that the devil by this takes opportunity to affright the men of the synagogue with the presence of Christ; he would dissuade them from receiving Christ by the terrors of Christ, as if Christ had come only to destroy them: *Thou, Jesus of Nazareth, art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.* The word, *hold thy peace,* is, in the original, *be muzzled;* it was not a bare command of silence, but there was such power in it, that it cast a muzzle upon the mouth of Satan, that he could speak no more: *and when the unclean spirit had torn him,* not with any gashes in his flesh, or dismembering of his body, for he hurt him not, but with some convulsion-fits, as it is supposed, then *he threw him in the midst,* and made an horrid cry, *and so came out.*

They all take notice of the doctrine attested by so great a miracle, What a word is this! Surely this was the great design of all the miracles of Christ, to prove his mission from God, to demonstrate his power unto men, to confirm his gospel, to endear his precepts, to work in us faith to help us heavenward: These signs are written that we might believe,—and that believing, we might have life through his name.

I have given you several instances of the miracles of Christ in this second year of his ministry; only a few words on this doctrine of miracles for our information: as—

1. What they are?
2. Why they are?
3. Whether they are continued in this great transaction of our salvation?

For the first, What they are? Miracles are unusual events, wrought above the course or possibility of nature: such were

the miracles of Christ, and such were the miracles of the prophets and of the apostles of Christ; for what they did was above nature; and all the difference betwixt their miracles and the miracles of Christ, was only in this, viz. they wrought them not in their own name and power, as Jesus Christ did.

For the second, Why they are? many reasons are given, but this is the main: "miracles are wrought for the grounding or confirming of some divine truth or doctrine at its first settling." To this purpose, miracles were as the trumpets or heralds by which the gospel was first commended unto us; as the law of Moses was first authorized by manifold miracles wrought in Sinai, and in the desert, which afterwards ceased when they were settled in the promised lands; so the gospel of Christ was first authorized by manifold miracles, but the sound thereof having now gone through all the world, these miracles cease.

For the third, Whether they are continued in this great transaction of our salvation? I answer, yea; in this respect miracles cease not; 'tis without controversy that Jesus Christ, in carrying on our salvation, is adding miracle to miracle: there is a chain of miracles in the matter of our salvation from first to last: as—

1. It was a miracle, that God, before we had a being, should have once thought of us; especially that the blessed Trinity should contrive that astonishing plot of the salvation of our souls: Oh what a miracle was this!

2. It was a miracle that God for our sakes should create the world, and, after our fall in Adam, should preserve the world, especially considering that our sin had unpinned the whole frame of the creation; and that God, even then sitting on his throne of judgment, ready to pass the doom of death for our first transgression, should give a promise of a Saviour, when justly he might have given us to the devil, and to hell, according to his own law: *In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die.*

3. It was a miracle that God's Son should take upon him our nature, and that in our nature he should transact our peace; that he should preach salvation to us all, if we would believe; and to the end that we might believe, that he would work so many signs and miracles in the presence of his disciples, and of a world of men.

4. It was a miracle that God should look upon us in our blood: O miracle of mercies! If creation cannot be without a miracle, surely the new creature is a miracle indeed. So contrary are our perverse natures to all possibilities of salvation, that if salvation had not marched to us all the way in a miracle, we should have perished in the ruins of a sad eternity. Indeed every man living in the state of grace, is a perpetual miracle; in such a one his reason is turned into faith, his soul into spirit, his body into a temple, his earth into heaven, his water into wine, his aversations

from Christ into intimate union with Christ. O what a chain of miracles is this! Why, Lord, *if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.* Say thus, you that are yet in your blood; Lord, *I believe, help thou my unbelief.*

CHAP. III.

Sect. I.—*Of the third Year of Christ's Ministry.*

Hitherto all was quiet: neither the Jews nor the Samaritans, nor Galileans, did as yet malign the doctrine or person of Jesus Christ; but he preached with much peace on all hands, till the beginning of this year. I shall not yet speak of his sufferings, neither shall I speak much of his doings; only such things as refer more principally to the main business of our salvation, I shall touch in these particulars:—as, 1. The ordination of the apostles. 2. His reception of sinners. 3. The easiness of his yoke, and the lightness of his burden.

Sect. II.—*Of Christ's Ordination of his Apostles.*

In the ordination of his apostles, are many considerable things. The evangelist Luke lays it down thus: *And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples, and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles.* Till now Christ taught alone; but because after his ascension he must needs have a ministry, until the end of the world—in the first place, he chooseth out some, whom he would have on purpose to wait upon him all the time of his ministry, till he was taken up into heaven. In this election, or ordination, here is the first person by whom they are chosen, Jesus Christ. 2. The place where they are chosen, in a mountain. 3. The time when they were chosen, after his watching and praying all night. 4. The company out of whom they were chosen, they were his disciples. 5. The number of them that were chosen, they were twelve. 6. The end to which they were chosen, it was an apostleship; he chose twelve, whom he also named apostles.

1. The person by whom they are chosen is Jesus Christ. They chose not themselves, but were chosen of Christ; this call was immediate, and therefore most excellent.

2. The place where they were chosen, it was on a mountain. Mountains are open and in view, which shews their ministry must be public; again, mountains are subject to winds and tempests, which shews their callings must meet with many oppositions.

3. The time when they are chosen; after he had continued all night in prayer to God: he goes not to election, but first he watches and prays all the night before. This shews the singular care that Christ had in this great employment: what! to set men apart to witness his name, and to publish to the world the gospel of Christ? This he would not do without much prayer.

4. The company out of whom they are chosen, *He called unto him his disciples, and out of them he chose twelve.* A disciple of Christ is one thing, and an apostle of Christ is another thing. Those were Christ's disciples, that embraced Christ's doctrine of faith and repentance. It was not material to the constituting of a disciple of Christ, whether they followed Christ, as many did, or returned to their own homes, as others did. The man out of whom the legion of devils were cast, besought Christ that he might be with him; but Jesus sent him away, saying, *Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done to thee.* I make no question but Christ at the election of his apostles had many disciples both waiting on him, and absent from him; and out of them that waited on him, his apostles were chosen: Christ's ministers should be first disciples. O how unfit are any to take upon them the ministry of Christ, that were never yet the disciples of Christ! First, the grace of God must be within us, and then must that grace of God be discovered by us.

5. The number of them that were chosen, they were twelve. Very probably the number was figured out to us in twelve tribes of Israel.

6. The end to which they were chosen, it was to an apostleship; *i. e.* that they might be Christ's legates to the sons of men, that they might be sent up and down the world to persuade men to salvation.

Sect. III.—*Of Christ's Reception of Sinners.*

I cannot limit this only to one year of Christ's ministry, but I shall only mention it this year. Now this will appear—1. In the doctrine of Christ; 2. In the practice of Christ.

1. In his doctrine; Christ lays it down expressly: *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* It is no more but, come, and welcome. The gospel shuts none out of heaven, but those that by unbelief lock the door against their own souls. Christ is so willing to receive sinners, as that he sets all his doors open, and he casts out none that will but come in. And why so? For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 1. I came down from heaven. It was a great journey from heaven to earth; and this great journey I undertook for no other pur-

pose but to save sinners. "Great actions," as one says well, "must needs have great ends." Now this was the greatest thing that ever was done, that the Son of God should come down from heaven. And, what was the end, but the reception and salvation of sinners? *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.* Had not Christ come down, sinners could not have gone up into heaven; and therefore that they might ascend, he descends. 2. I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. His Father had sent him on purpose to receive and to save sinners; and, to this purpose he is called the apostle of our profession,—who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. His Father could not send him on any errand, but he was sure to do it. His Father's mission was a strong demonstration that Christ was willing to receive those sinners that would come to him.

Again, Jesus stood and cried, saying, *If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.* The very pith, heart, and marrow of the gospel is contained in these words: the occasion of them was thus; on that last day of the feast of tabernacles, the Jews were wont, with great solemnity, to draw water out of the fountain of Siloam, at the foot of mount Sion, and to bring it to the altar, singing out of Isaiah, *With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.* Now Christ takes them at this custom, and recals them from earthly to heavenly waters; alluding to that of Isaiah, "*Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.—Incline your ears, and come unto me, and your souls shall live.* The Father saith, Come; the Son saith, Come; the Spirit saith, Come; yea, *the Spirit and the bride say, Come; let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him drink of the water of life freely.* All the time of Christ's ministry, we see him tiring himself, in going about from place to place, upon no other errand than this, to cry at the markets, 'Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters! If any sinners love life, if any will go to heaven, let them come to me, and I will shew them the way to my Father's bosom, and endear them to my Father's heart.'

2. Christ's reception of sinners appears yet more in his practice. How welcome were all sorts of sinners unto him! He cast out none that acknowledged him for the Messiah; he turned none away that gave up their souls to be saved by him in his own way. This he manifests—1. Parabolically; 2. Really.

(1.) Parabolically, especially in those three parables, of the lost goat, and of the lost sheep, and of the lost son; I shall instance in this last, which may serve for all the rest.—When the prodigal was yet afar off, his father saw him, and had compassion on him, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

In these words, observe, 1. His father sees him, before he sees his father; no sooner a sinner thinks of heaven, but the Lord spies him, and takes notice of him. 2. The Lord sees him while he was yet a great way off; he was but in the beginning of his way: his father might have let him alone until he had come quite home to his house, and it had been a singular mercy to have bid him welcome then; but he takes notice of him yet a great way off. Sinners may be far off from God in their own apprehensions, and yet the Lord even then draws near; whilst thus they apprehend. 3. His father had pity or compassion on him; the Lord's bowels yearn within him, at the sight of his returning prodigals. 4. His father ran; there is much in this: as, (1.) It had been mercy though his father had stood still until his son had come. (2.) What a mercy is this, that his father will go, and give his son the meeting! (3.) But, above all, O what abundant mercy call we this, that the father will not go, but run! If he would needs meet his son, might he not have walked towards him in a soft slow pace? O no, if a sinner will but come, or creep towards Christ, mercy will not go a foot-pace, but run to meet him: bowels full of mercy, out-pace bowels pinched with hunger; God's mercy is over all his works, and so it is over all our needs, and over all our sins. 5. He ran, and fell on his neck; *i. e.* he hugged and embraced him; O wonder! who would not have been loth to have touched him? was he not in his loathsome, stinking rags? we see mercy is not nice: *When I passed by,* said God, *I saw thee polluted in thy own blood, and I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live:* that very time of her blood, was the time of love. 6. He ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: there is a passage somewhat like this, *And Esau ran to meet Jacob, and he embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him;* before, he had thought to have killed him, but now he kissed him: it is not to tell how dear the father was to his prodigal son, when he ran, and fell on his neck, and embraced, and kissed him. The scope of the parable is this, that Christ is willing and glad to receive sinners. Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways; *for why will ye die, O house of Israel?*

Christ manifests this willingness in his practice really; amongst many instances I shall insist only on one, a notable instance of this year: one of the Pharisees, named Simon, invited Christ to eat with him, into whose house when he had entered, a certain woman, that was a sinner, abiding there in the city, heard of it: she came to Jesus in the Pharisee's house, and no sooner come, but she lays her burden at Jesus' feet, and presents him with a broken heart and weeping eye, and an alabaster box of ointment: *She stood at his feet behind him, weeping, and began to wash his feet with her tears, and to wipe them with the hairs*

of her head; and she kissed his feet, and anointed them with ointment. 1. She stands at his feet, a sign of her humility. O what a change! She that was before a noble personage, a native of the town and castle of Magdal, from whence she had her name of Magdalen—and therefore took her liberty of pride and lust—comes in remorse and regret for her sins; and throwing away her former pride, stoops, and waits, and humbly stands at Jesus's feet. 2. She stood at his feet behind him; it comprehends a tacit confession of her sins, she knew herself unworthy of Christ's presence: she durst not look him in the face; but, she waits behind him; her shame speaks her repentance. 3. She stood at his feet behind him weeping, her grief burst out in tears; she heeds not the feast, or feaster, but, falling down, weeps bitterly for her sins. 4. She began to wash his feet with tears; she wept a shower of tears, great enough to wash the feet of her blessed Jesus. This was the manner of the Jews, to eat their meat lying down, and leaning on their elbows; and in this posture, Jesus sitting or lying at meat, Mary had the convenience to weep on his feet. 5. She wipes his feet with the hairs of her head; her hair being added to her beauty, she made it a snare for men; but now she consecrates it to her Lord; worthy fruit of serious repentance. 6. She kissed his feet, in token of her new choice, and new affection; her kisses had formerly been to wantons, but now she bestows them on the feet of Christ. 7. She anointed them with ointment; which expression was so great an ecstacy of love and sorrow, that to anoint the feet of the greatest monarch was long unknown, and in all the pomps of Roman prodigality, it was never used until Otho taught it Nero. When Simon observed this sinner so busy, he thought within himself, that Christ was no prophet, that he did not know her to be a sinner; for although the Jews' religion did permit harlots to live, yet the Pharisees would not admit them to the benefits of ordinary society: and hence Simon made an objection within himself, which Jesus knowing, (for he understood his thoughts as well as words,) first makes her apology, and then his own; the scope gives us to understand, that Christ was not of the same superciliousness with the Pharisees; but that repenting sinners should be welcome unto him; and this welcome he publisheth first to Simon, *Her sins which are many, are forgiven;* and then to the woman, *Thy sins are forgiven thee, thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace.*

What! is Christ most willing to receive sinners? O then! who would not come to Jesus Christ? Methinks now all sinners, of all sorts, should say, though I have been a drunkard, a swearer, an unclean person, yet now I hear Christ is willing to receive sinners, and therefore I will go to Jesus Christ. This is my exhortation, O come unto Christ, come unto Christ; behold here in the name of the Lord I stand, and make invitation

to poor sinners; O will you not come? How will ye answer it at the great day, when it shall be said, The Lord Jesus made a tender of mercy to you, and you would not accept of it? O come to Christ, and believe on Christ; as Christ is willing to receive you, so be you willing to give up your souls to him.

Sect. IV.—*Of Christ's easy Yoke and light Burden.*

For the easiness of Christ's yoke, and the lightness of Christ's burden, Christ delivers it in these words: *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me,—for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

My yoke, i. e. my commandments, so the apostle John gives the interpretation, *His commandments are not grievous. My yoke is easy,* i. e. My commandments are without any inconvenience: the trouble of a yoke, is not the weight, but the uneasiness of it, and Christ speaks suitably, *My yoke is easy, and my burden,* i. e. my institutions: the word primarily signifies the freight or ballast of a ship, which cuts through the waves, as if it had no burden; and without which burden there were no safety in the ship.

The christian religion, and the practice of it, is full of sweetness, easiness, and pleasantness.

The reasons of the sweetness, easiness, and pleasantness of the christian religion, and the practice of it, I shall reduce to these heads:

1. The christian religion is most rational. If we should look into the best laws that the wisest men in the world ever agreed upon, we shall find that Christ adopted the quintessence of them all into his own law. The highest pitch of reason is but as a spark, a taper, which is involved and swallowed up in the body of this great light, that is made up by the Sun of righteousness. Some observe, that Christ's discipline is the breviary of all the wisdom of the best men, and a fair copy and transcript of his Father's wisdom; there is nothing in the laws of the christian religion, but what is perfective of our spirits. Indeed the Greeks, whom the world admired for their wisdom, accounted the preaching of the gospel foolishness, and therefore God blasted their wisdom, as it is written, *I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent,* 1 Cor. i. 19. The gospel may be as foolishness unto some, *but unto them which are called,—Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*

The christian religion is all composed of peace; *her ways are the ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace,* Prov. xvii. 3. Christ framed all his laws in compliance of his design of peace; peace within, and peace at home, and peace abroad. 1. It holds forth a certain heavenly peace and tranquillity

within: *Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them.* But on the contrary: *the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest; whose waters cast up mire and dirt:—there is no peace, saith my God to the wicked.* Their passions were never yet mortified; and such passions usually rage in wicked men as are most contrary, and demand contrary things: the desire of honour cries, spend here; but the passion of avarice cries, hold thy hands: lust cries, venture here; but pride saith, no such thing, it may turn to thy dishonour: anger cries, revenge thyself here; but ambition says, it is better to dissemble: and here is fulfilled that of the psalmist, *I have seen violence and strife in the city.* The vulgar renders it, 'I have seen iniquity and contradiction in the self-same city.' First, Iniquity, for all the demands of these passions are unjust. And, 2. Contradiction, for one passion cries out against another. But now, great peace have they that love thy law; for by the aid of Christ and his grace, their passions are subdued, and they pass on their life sweetly and calmly, without any perturbations much troubling their spirits; they have that *peace which passeth all understanding*, which the world can neither give nor taste of.

2. It holds forth peace at home: the laws of Jesus teach us how to bear with the infirmities of our relatives; and, indeed, whosoever obeys the laws of Jesus Christ, he seeks with sweetness to remedy all differences, he throws water upon a spark, he lives sweetly with his wife, affectionately with his children, discreetly with his servants; and they all look upon him as their guardian, friend, and patron: but, look upon an angry man, not subject to these christian laws, and when he enters upon his threshold, it gives an alarm to his house, every little accident is the matter of a quarrel, and every quarrel discomposes the peace of the house, and sets it on fire, and no man can tell how far it may burn. O the sweetness, easiness, and pleasantness of the christian religion! Where that is embraced and followed, the man is peaceable, and charitable, and just, and loving, and forbearing, and forgiving; and how should there be but content in this blessed family?

3. It holds out peace abroad; it commands all offices of kindness, gentleness, love, meekness, humility; it prescribes an austere, and yet a sweet deportment; it commands all those labours of love, to relieve the stranger, to visit the sick, to wash the feet of the poor; it sends upon charitable embassies, to unclean prisons, nasty dungeons, and, in the cause of Christ, to lay down our lives one for another: it teacheth us how to return good for evil, kindness for injuries, a soft answer for the rough words of an enemy. O! when I think of this, I cannot but think of him who said, "That either this was not the christian religion, or we were not Christians." For my part, I am easily persuaded, that if we would but live according to the christian

religion, one of those great plagues that vex the world (I mean the plague of war) would be no more. Certainly this was one of the designs of Christianity, that there should be no wars, no jars, no discontents amongst men. And if all men that are called Christians, were indeed charitable, peaceable, just, loving, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, what sweet peace should we have? How would this world be an image of heaven, and of the society of saints and angels in glory?

Thus far I have held forth Jesus in his life, or during the time of his ministry: and now was it that Jesus *knew his hour was come, and that he should depart out of this world unto the Father:* but of that hereafter. Our next business is to direct you in the art or mystery, how we are to look unto Jesus in respect of this life.

CHAP. V.

Sect. I.—*Of Knowing Jesus as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation in his Life.*

From the object considered, that we may pass to the act,—

1. Let us know Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation during his life. We have many books of the lives of men; of the lives of heathens, of the lives of Christians; and by this we come to know the generations of old: but above all, read over the life of Jesus, for that is worth thy knowing. To this purpose we have four Evangelists, who in blessed harmony set forth his life: these should be read over and over; *then shall we know,* saith the prophet, *if we follow on to know the Lord.* Ah! my soul, that which thou knowest of Christ already is but the least part of what thou art ignorant of. *We know but in part,* saith Paul of himself and others. The highest knowledge which the most illuminate saints have of Jesus Christ is but imperfect. Come then, and follow on to know the Lord: still inquire after him; imitate the angels, who ever desire to stoop down and to pry into the actings of Christ for our salvation. And for thy better knowledge, (1.) Study over those passages in the first year of Christ's ministry: as, the preaching of John, the baptism of Christ, his fasting and temptation in the wilderness, his first manifestation by his several witnesses, his whipping of the buyers and sellers out of the temple. (2.) Study over those passages in the second year of Christ's ministry; as, those several sermons that he preached; and because his miracles were as signals of his sermons, study the several miracles that he wrought: thou hast but a few instances in comparison of all his miracles, and yet how fruitful are they of spiritual instructions! (3.) Study

over those passages in the third year of Christ's ministry; as, his commissioning his apostles to call sinners, his readiness to receive them that would come in, and his sweetening the ways of Christianity to them that are come; *for his yoke is easy, and his burden is light.*

O what rare matter is here for christian study! Some have took such pains in the study of these things, that they have writ large volumes. Men have been writing and preaching a thousand six hundred years of the life of Christ, and they are writing and preaching still. O, my soul, if thou dost not write, yet study what is written. Come with fixed thoughts to that blessed subject, that will make thee wise unto salvation. Paul accounted all things but dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. If thou didst truly understand the excellency of this knowledge, thou couldst not but account all things loss in comparison of it.

Sect. II.—*Of Considering Jesus in that respect.*

Let us consider Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation during his life. It is not enough to study and know, but we must muse and meditate, and consider it, till we bring it to some profitable issue. By meditating on Christ, we may feel a kind of insensible change; as those that stand in the sun for other purposes, they find themselves lightened and heated; therefore, look further, O my soul, have strong apprehensions of those several passages of the life of Christ.

1. Consider the preaching of John Baptist. We talk of strictness, but shew me among all the ministers or saints of this age, such a pattern of sanctity and singular austerity. He had an excellent zeal, and a vehement spirit in preaching, and the commentary upon all his sermons was his life; he was clothed in camels' hair, his meat was locusts and wild honey. He contemned the world, resisted temptations, despised honours, and in all passages was a rare example of self-denial and mortification: and by this means made an excellent preparation for the Lord's coming. O my soul, sit a while under this preacher. See, what effect doth it work on thy heart and life? Dost thou feel in thee a spirit of mortification? Dost thou with the Baptist die to the world? Dost thou deny thy will? Dost thou abstain from pleasures, and sensual complacencies, that the flesh being subdued to the spirit, both may join in the service of God? O, my soul, so consider the preaching of this forerunner of Christ, till thou feelest this consideration to have some warmth in thy heart, and influence on thy life, in order to holiness, self-denial, and mortification.

2. Consider the baptism of Christ. He was baptized, that in the symbol he might purify our nature, whose stains and guilt

he had undertaken. Surely every soul that lives the life of grace, is born of water and the Spirit; and to this purpose, Christ, who is our life, went down into the waters of baptism, that we, who descend after him, might find the effects of it, pardon of sin, and holiness of life. Had not Christ been baptized, what virtue had there been in our baptism? As it became him to fulfil all righteousness, and therefore he must needs be baptized, so he fulfilled it not for himself, but for us. Christ's obedience in fulfilling the law is imputed to all that believe unto righteousness, as if themselves had fulfilled; so that he was baptized for us, and the virtue of his baptism is derived unto us; therefore, if thou art in Christ, thou art baptized into his death, and baptized unto his baptism; thou partakest of the fruit and efficacy both of his death, and life, and baptism, and all.

3. Consider the fasting and temptation of Christ in the wilderness. Now we see what manner of adversary we have, how he fights, how he is resisted, how overcome. In one assault, Satan moves Christ to doubt of his Father's providence; in another, to presume on his Father's protection; and when neither diffidence nor presumption can fasten upon Christ, he shall be tried with honour: and thus he deals with us; if he cannot drive us to despair, he labours to lift us up to presumption; and if neither of these prevail, then he brings out pleasures, profits, honours, which are indeed most dangerous. O, my soul, whilst thou art in this warfare, here is thy condition; temptations, like waves, break one in the neck of another: if the devil was so busy with Christ, how shouldst thou hope to be free? How mayst thou account that the repulse of one temptation will but invite to another? But here is thy comfort, thou hast such a Saviour as was in all things tempted in like sort, yet without sin. How boldly therefore mayst thou go to the throne of grace to receive mercy, and to find grace to help in time of need! Christ was tempted, that he might succour them that are tempted. Never art thou tempted, O my soul, but Christ is with thee in the temptation. He hath sent his Spirit into thy heart, to make intercession for thee there; and he himself is in heaven, making intercession, and praying for thee there; yea, his own experience of temptations hath so wrought it in his heart, that his love and mercy is most of all at work when thou art tempted most. As dear parents are ever tender of their children, but then especially when they are sick and weak: so, though Christ be always tender of his people, yet then especially when their souls are sick, and under temptation; then his bowels yearn over them indeed.

4. Consider Christ's first manifestations by his several witnesses. We have heard of his witnesses from heaven, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and of his witnesses on earth, the Baptist, his disciples, and the works that he did in his Father's name;

and all these witnesses being lively held forth in the preaching of the gospel, they are witnesses to us; even to this day is Christ manifested to us; yea, and if we are Christ's, even unto this day is Christ manifested within us. O my soul, consider this above all! It is this manifestation within that concerns thee most;—because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts. If Christ be not manifested in thy heart by his blessed Spirit, thou art no son of God; and therefore the apostle puts thee seriously on this trial: *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith, prove yourselves; know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?* Is Christ manifested in thee? Surely this is more than Christ manifested to thee. The bare history is a manifestation of Christ unto thee, but there is a mystery in the inward manifestation. The apostle speaking of the saints, adds, *To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.* O the riches of the glory of this mystery! God might have shut thee up in blindness with the world; but hath he revealed Christ in thee? Hath he let thee see into the wonders of his glory? Hath he given thee the light of his glory within? This only the experimental Christian feels.

5. Consider the preaching of Christ. O the admirable sermons of this great prophet! Read and peruse those he hath left on record. How spiritual was that sermon of Christ! *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* It may be thou art a doctor, a master of Israel, thou art a learned scholar, thou art a man of parts and abilities in other things; it may be thou hast read so long in the Bible, thou hast heard so many and so many sermons; but, ah! miserable soul, it may be all the work is to do still within. Come, say this sermon of Christ to thine own soul: 'Unless I be born again, I cannot enter into heaven. Born again! O Lord, what is that? Was ever such a thing done upon me? Was I ever cast into the pangs of a new birth? and continued I in those pangs until Christ Jesus was formed in me? Are all things done away, and all things now become new? Is the old man, the old lusts, the old conversation, quite abandoned and left? Are my principles new? my aims and ends new? my life and conversation new?' Thus might I paraphrase on all the sermons; but I intend brevity. Only consider, O my soul, as if this sermon, and all the rest, had been preached to thee; realize Christ standing by thee, and opening his mouth, and teaching thee thus and thus. Surely there is a speaking of Christ from heaven: *See that ye refuse not him* (saith the apostle) *that speaketh from heaven.* And besides, he hath his ministers here on earth, and they are daily preaching over these sermons of Christ; they preach such things as were first spoken by the Lord himself: they beseech and pray

thee in Christ's stead. O then, meditate on these things, and give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all.

6. Consider the miracles of Christ in pursuance of the doctrine delivered in his blessed sermons. Here is a world of matter to run over; such miracles as never man did before. O my soul, consider of these miracles, and believe that doctrine which was ratified with arguments from above. How shouldst thou but assent to all those mysterious truths which are so strongly confirmed by an almighty hand.

7. Consider Christ's ordination of his apostles: *He chose twelve, whom he named apostles.* And what was the office of these apostles, but to go and teach all nations? The gospel was first preached in Jewry, but afterwards the sound of it came unto us. O the goodness of God in Christ! What! that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, beginning at Jerusalem, and afterwards among all nations! Of what near concernment, O my soul, is this to thee! What art thou but a sinner of the Gentiles? Understand that term: when the apostles would express the greatest sinners that the world had, he calls them sinners of the Gentiles. Why? The Gentiles knew not God, the Gentiles were unacquainted with Christ, the Gentiles walked in nothing but sin. O then what a love is this, that God should ever have thought of good-will towards thee? How shouldst thou be ravished in this one meditation! What! that the sun of his gospel, now in these latter times, when the sun is set in Zion where it first arose, should make a noon with us, and shine more brightly here, for ought I know, or can yet learn, than in any other nation, country, kingdom, throughout all the world! O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and counsel of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

8. Consider Christ's reception of sinners. He sent forth his apostles to call them in; and if they would but come, how ready was he to receive them! This was Christ's errand from heaven: Ah, poor soul! why shouldst thou despair because of sin? Look on Christ as spreading out his arms to receive thee. Look on the gracious nature that is in Christ: look on the office of Christ; 'tis an office of saving, and shewing mercy, that Christ hath undertaken; 'tis an office to receive sinners; yea, to seek and to save that which was lost; to bring home straying souls to God; to be the great Peace-maker between God and man.

Certainly the devil strangely wrongeth many a poor troubled soul, that he can bring them to have hard thoughts of Jesus Christ: how can they more contradict the office of Christ? How can they more contradict the gospel-description of Christ, than to think him a destroyer of his creatures, and one that hath more mind to hurt than help them? Resolve, O my soul, to throw

thyself on him for life and for salvation: why, if thou wilt but come, he hath promised freely to make thee welcome: all the day long he stretcheth out his arms, and would fain gather thee and all others into his embraces.

9. Consider the easiness of his yoke, and the lightness of his burden. Many a one is willing to take Jesus as their Saviour, but they are unwilling to take him on his own terms; they imagine it an hard task, and a heavy burden: it is otherwise with Christians; for his commandments are not grievous. O my soul, if thou canst but taste, thou wilt find a world of sweetness in Christ's ways: there is sweetness in the word, *How sweet are thy words to my taste, yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!* There is sweetness in prayer; hast thou not known the time that thou hast tasted the joys of heaven in prayer? There is sweetness in meditation: now, O, my soul, thou art in the exercise of this duty, now thou art in the meditation of the easiness of Christ's burden, tell me, is there nothing of heaven in this meditation? O if men did but know what ravishing sweetness were in the ways of God, they could not but embrace them, and esteem one day's society with Jesus Christ better than all the gold in the world!

10. Consider the holiness of Christ's nature, and the holiness of his life.

(1.) For the holiness of his nature; if thou couldst but clearly see it, what work would it make in thy breast! Christ's inward beauty would ravish love out of the devils, if they had but grace to see his beauty. This loveliness of Christ ravishes the souls of the glorified. How is it, O my soul, that thou art not taken with this meditation? But,—

(2.) Go from the holiness of his nature to the holiness of his life, it may be that will make deep impressions on thy spirit. Consider his charity, his self-denial, his contempt of the world, his mercy, his bounty, his meekness, his pity, his humility, his obedience to his Father. A fruitful meditation on these particulars cannot but make thee like Christ. O the wonder that any should disclaim the active obedience of Christ, as to his own justification! Away, away with these cavils, and consider the obedience of Christ in relation to thyself. "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." That is, under the whole law: the one half of the law, which is the directive part, he was made under that, and satisfied it by the innocency of his life, without breaking one jot or tittle of the law, and so he answers that part, as it might be the principal; the other half of the law, which is the penalty, he was under that also, and satisfied it by suffering a wrongful death, no way deserved or due by him, and so he answered that part, as it might be the forfeiture. But if we come now to ask, For

whom is all this? It is only for us, that we might be redeemed and adopted; redeemed from all evil, and adopted or interested into all good. If this be so, O who would, for a world of gold, lose the influence and the benefit of Christ's active obedience! Consider of this, O my soul, until thou feelest some virtue to come out of Christ's life into thyself.

Sect. III.—*Of Desiring Jesus in that respect.*

Let us desire Jesus, carrying on the work of salvation in his life: it is not enough to know and consider, but we must desire; our meditation of Christ should draw forth our affections to Christ; and amongst all affections I place this first of all, a desire after Christ.

But what is it in Christ's life that is so desirable? I answer, every passage, every thing of Christ, is desirable. All that concerns Christ in any kind whatsoever is very precious, and excellent, and necessary, and profitable, and comfortable, and therefore desirable: but to put them in order,—

1. The meanest things of Christ are desirable things. The very filings of the gold, the dust of precious stones, are of real value. Hence we read, that one poor woman sought no more but to wash Christ's feet, and to kiss them: another breathes out these desires; If I may but touch the hem of his garment, I shall be whole. John the Baptist thinks it an honour to unloose the latchets of his shoes; David, to be a doorkeeper of the house of God. Yea, he puts a happiness on the sparrow and the swallow, that may build their nests beside the Lord's altar.

2. The more considerable actions of Christ are especially desirable. O my soul, run through his life, and consider some of his more eminent actions. (1.) To his friends, he was sweet and indulgent: where there was any beginning of grace, he did encourage it; so was the prophecy, *A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoaking flax shall he not quench.* And so the people that fainted, that were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd; he was moved with compassion on them; he was bowelled in heart, his very bowels were moved within him. (2.) To his enemies he was kind and merciful: many a time he discovers himself most of all unto sinners; he was never more familiar with any at first acquaintance, than with the woman of Samaria, that was an adulteress: and Mary, that had been a sinner, how sweetly did he appear to her at the very first view! How ready was he to receive sinners! How ready to pardon sinners! How gracious to sinners after pardon! See it in Peter: he never upbraided him; only he looks upon him, and afterwards, *Lovest thou me?* Often he was wronged by men; but what then? Did he call for fire down from heaven? indeed, his disciples would fain have had it so; but he sweetly replies,

You know not what spirits you are of; the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. Sometimes we find him shedding tears for those very persons that shed his blood: *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,—if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things belonging to thy peace.* Well might they sing in that day in the land of Judah,—*In the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.*

3. The ever-blessed and holy person of Christ is desirable above all. *My beloved is the chiefest of ten thousand; yea, he is altogether lovely,* or desirable, so Vatablus renders it, "Christus est totus desideria," Christ is all desires. If the actions of Christ be desirable, what must himself be? he is the express image of the person of his Father; as the print of the seal on the wax is the express image of the seal itself, so is Christ the highest representation of God. And hence it is that Christ is called the Standard-bearer of ten thousands: all excellencies are gathered in Christ, as beams in the sun. Come, poor soul! thy eyes run to and fro in the world to find comfort and happiness; cast thy eyes back, and see heaven and earth in one; look if thou wilt, at what thy vast thoughts can fancy, not only in this world, but in the world to come; see that, and infinitely more, shining forth from the person of Jesus Christ: no wonder if the saints adore him, no wonder if the angels stand amazed at him, no wonder if all creatures vail all their glory to him.

O, what are things in the world to Jesus Christ! Paul compares them together, with this one thing: *And I account all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.* And I account all things: surely all things is the greatest account that can be cast up; for it includeth all prices, all sums; it takes in earth and heaven, and all therein; what are they in comparison of Christ, but as feathers, dung, shadows, nothing? If there be any thing worthy a wish, it is eminently, transcendently in the Lord Jesus Christ: there is no honour, no felicity, like that which Christ hath; some are sons, Christ is an only Son; some are kings, but Christ is King of kings; some are honourable, none above angels; Christ is above angels and archangels: *To which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee?* Some are wealthy, Christ hath all the sheep on a thousand hills; the very uttermost parts of the earth are his: some are beautiful, Christ is the fairest of all the children of men! he is spiritually fair, he is all glorious within. If the beauty of the angels (which I believe are the beautifullest creatures the world has) should be compared with the beauty of Christ, they would be but as lumps of darkness: the brightest cherub is forced to screen his face from the dazzling

brightness of Christ. Alas! the cherubim and seraphim are but as stars in the canopy of heaven; but Christ is the Sun of righteousness, that at once illuminates and drowns them all.

Come then, breathe, O my soul, after the enjoyment of this Christ; 'O that this Christ was mine! O that the actions of Christ and the person of Christ, were mine! O that all he said, and all he did, and all he were, were mine! O that I had the silver wings of a dove, that in all my wants I might fly into the bosom of Christ; If I must not sit at table, O that I might but gather up the crumbs! Surely there is bread enough in my Father's house; Christ is the bread of life; Christ is enough for all the saints in heaven and earth to feed on; and what, must I pine away, and perish with hunger? Thousands of instructions dropped from him while he was on earth; O that some of that food might be my nourishment! O that my ways were directed according to his statutes! Many a stream, and wave, and line, and precept, flowed from this fountain, Christ; O that I might drink freely of this water of life! He hath proclaimed it in my ears: *If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.* O that I might come and find welcome! Sure I thirst, I feel in me such a burning drought, that either I must drink or die; either the righteousness of Christ, the holiness of Christ, the holiness of his nature, and the holiness of his life, must be imputed unto me, or farewell happiness in another world. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly; I long to see the beauty of thy face! Such is thy beauty, that it steals away my heart after thee, and I cannot be satisfied until, with Absalom, I see the King's face. Come, Christ! or if thou wilt not come, *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him I am sick of love.*'

Sect. IV.—*Of Hoping in Jesus in that respect.*

Let us hope in Jesus, carrying on the great work of our salvation in his life. By this hope, I mean an hope well grounded. The main question is, whether Christ's life be mine? whether all those passages of his life laid open, belong unto me? whether the habitual righteousness, and actual holiness, of Christ be imputed to my justification? and what are the grounds and foundations on which my hope is built? The apostle tells us, that God gives good hopes through grace; if hope be right and good, it will manifest itself by operation of saving grace; O look into thy soul! what gracious effects of the life of Christ are there? Certainly his life is not without some influence on our spirits, if we be his members, and he be our head. O the glorious effects flowing out of Christ's life, into a believer's soul!

1. If Christ's life be mine, then am I freed from the law of sin; this was the apostle's evidence:—for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death. Christ's life is called the spirit of life, because of its perfection; and this spirit of life hath such a power in it, here termed a law, that it works out, in believers, a freedom from the law or power of sin. Look to this! Doth the power of Christ's life throw out of thy heart and life the power of sin? Here is one ground of hope.

2. If Christ's life be mine, then I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. Paul speaks out this evidence; *I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, &c.* He conjoins the death of Christ, and the life of Christ, in one and the same soul: as if he had said, No man knows the benefit of Christ's death, but he that feels the virtue of Christ's life; there is no assurance of Christ's dying for us, but as we feel Christ living in us; if the power of Christ's death mortify my lusts, then the virtue of Christ's life will quicken my soul: *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:* I live to God, and not unto myself; I live to Christ, and not unto the world; I live according to the will of God, and not after my own lust and fancy. O my soul! question thyself in these few particulars; dost thou live to God, and not thyself? Dost thou live to Christ, and not to the world? Dost thou derive thy life from Christ? And hath that life of Christ a special influence in thy soul? Dost thou feel Christ living in thy understanding and will, in thy imagination and affections, in thy duties and services? 1. In thy understanding, by prizing the knowledge of Christ, by determining to know nothing in comparison of Christ. 2. In thy will, by making thy will free to choose and embrace Christ; and by making his will to rule in thy will. 3. In thy imagination, by thinking upon him with more frequency and delight; by having more high, and honourable, and sweet apprehensions of Christ than of all the creatures. 4. In thy affections, by fearing Christ above all earthly powers, and by loving Christ above all earthly persons. 5. In thy duty and services, by doing all thou doest in his name, by his assistance, and for his glory. Why then, here is another ground of thy hope; surely thou hast thy part in Christ's life.

Away, away with all doubts and perplexing fears! If thou findest the power of sin dying in thee; if thou livest, and livest not, but in truth it is Christ that lives in thee; then thou mayest assure thyself that Christ's habitual righteousness, and actual holiness, is imputed to thy justification; thou mayest confidently resolve that every passage of Christ's life belongs to thee. Would Christ have ever lived in thee, have been the soul of thy soul, the all of thy understanding and will, imaginations and affections, duties and services, if he had not purposed to have saved thee by his life? Surely it is good that I both hope, and quietly wait

for the salvation of God. I cannot hope in vain, if these be the grounds of my hope.

Sect. V.—*Of Believing in Jesus in that respect.*

Let us believe in Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation in his life. Many souls stand aloof, not daring to make a particular application of Christ and his life to themselves; but, herein is the property of faith, it brings all home, and makes use of whatsoever Christ is, or does, for himself.

1. In order to this, faith must directly go to Christ. Many poor souls, humbled for sin, run immediately to the promise of pardon, and rest on it, not seeking for, or closing with Christ in the promise; this is a common error, but we should observe, that the first promise that was given, was not a bare word, simply promising pardon, peace, or any other benefit; but, it was a promise of Christ's person, as overcoming Satan, and purchasing those benefits: *The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.* So, when the promise was renewed to Abraham, it was not a bare promise of blessedness and forgiveness, but of that seed, that is, Christ, (*Gal.* iii. 6.) in whom that blessedness was conveyed: *In thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.* So that Abraham's faith first closed with Christ in the promise, and therefore he is said to see Christ's day, and rejoice. Christ, in the first place, is every where made the thing which faith embraced to salvation, and whom it looks unto and respects, as it makes us righteous in the sight of God. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.* And hence it is called the faith of Christ, *Gal.* ii. 16. *Phil.* iii. 9. Because Christ is it whom faith apprehends immediately; and, as for the other promises, they depend all on this,—*Whosoever believeth on him, shall receive remission of sins;* and, *he that believeth on the Son of God shall have life everlasting.* O remember this, in the first place, faith must go unto Christ; and yet I mean not to Christ, as nakedly considered, but to Christ as compassed with all his promises, privileges, benefits.

2. Faith must go to Christ, as God in the flesh. But now under the New Testament, our faith more usually and immediately addresseth itself unto Christ, as God dwelling in our nature, than to the Father, who is merely God. God in the flesh is more distinctly set forth in the New Testament, and so he is more distinctly to be apprehended by the faith of all believers. Remember this; let our faith, in the more direct and immediate exercise of it, be pitched upon Christ, as God in the flesh.

3. Faith must go to Christ, as God in the flesh, made under the law. And hence it is, that the apostle joins these together;

God sent his Son, made of a woman, made under the law: if Christ had been out of the compass of the law, his being incarnate, and made of a woman, had done us no good. Suppose one in debt, and danger of the law, to have a brother of the same flesh and blood, of the same father and mother; what will this avail, if that same brother will not come under the law, that is, become his surety, and undertake for him? This is our case, —we are debtors to God, and there is an hand-writing against us. Here is a bond of the law, which we have forfeited; now, what will Christ avail, if he had not come under the law, if he had not been our surety, and undertook for us? Our faith, therefore, must go to Christ, as made under the law, not only taking our nature upon him, but our debt also; our nature as men, and our debt as sinful men: "he hath made himself sin for us, who knew no sin;" that is, he made him to be handled as a sinner for us under the law, though he knew no sin on his part, but continued in all things written in the book of the law, to do them. He both satisfied the curse, and fulfilled the commandments! O remember this: as Christ, and as Christ in the flesh, so Christ in the flesh made under the law, is principally to be in the eye of our faith. If we put all together, our first view of faith is to look on Christ, God in the flesh, made under the law.

4. Faith going to Christ as God in the flesh, and as made under the law, is principally to look to the end of Christ, as being God in the flesh, and as fulfilling the law.

The apostle tells us of a remote, and of a more immediate end.

(1.) Of a remote end. "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." This was the remote end of Christ. Alas! we were strangers from the adoption, and lay under the law, as men whom sentence had passed on. Now, from this latter we are redeemed; he was under the law, that we might be redeemed from under the law; nor is that all, but as we are redeemed, so are we adopted the children of God: and, this end I rather attribute to the life of Christ, that we might receive the adoption; that is, from the estate of prisoners condemned, that we might be translated into the estate of children adopted. O the mercy of God! who ever heard of a condemned man to be afterwards adopted? Would not a condemned prisoner think himself happy to escape with life? But the zeal of the Lord of hosts hath performed this; we are in Christ both pardoned and adopted; and, by this means, God's heavenly inheritance is estated upon us. O let our faith look mainly to this design of Christ! *He was made under the law*, yea, and under the directive part of the law, by his life; he fulfilled every tittle of the law by his obedience, that we might be entitled to glory.

(2.) For the more immediate end of Christ: the apostle tells us, Christ was made under the law, or fulfilled all righteousness, that the law might be fulfilled in us. O my soul, look to this! Herein lies the pith and the marrow of thy justification. Of thyself thou canst do nothing good; but Christ fulfilleth the law in thy stead; and if now thou wilt but exercise thy faith, thou mayest feel the virtue and efficacy of Christ's righteousness flowing into thy own soul. But here is the question, How should I manage my faith, to feel Christ's righteousness my righteousness? I answer, 1. Thy way is to discern this righteousness of Christ, this holy and perfect life of the Lord Jesus, in the whole, and in all the parts of it, as it is laid down in the written word. 2. Thy way is to believe and to receive this as sacred and unquestionable in reference to thy own soul. 3. Thy way is to apply and improve this discovery according to those ends, to which thou believest they were designed. Yea, but there lies the question, how may that be done? I answer,—

[1.] Setting before thee that discovery, (that perfect life of Christ,) first endeavour to be deeply humbled for thy great inconformity thereto in whole and in part.

[2.] Still keeping thy spirit intent on the pattern, quicken, provoke, and increase thy sluggish soul, with renewed, redoubled vigilancy and industry, to come up higher towards it, and (if it were possible) completely to it.

[3.] Yet having the same copy before thee, exercise faith thereupon, as that which was performed, and is accepted on thy behalf. And so go to God, and offer Christ's holy life and active obedience unto him. And that, first to fill up the defects of thy utmost endeavour. Secondly, to put a value and worth upon what thou doest, and attainest to. Thirdly, to make Christ's righteousness thy own, that thou mayest say with the psalmist, in way of assurance: *O God my righteousness.*

Sect. VI.—*Of Loving Jesus in that respect.*

Let us love Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation, during his life. O what a lovely object is the life of Christ? Who can read over his life, who can think over his worthiness, both in his person, relations, actions, and several administrations, and not love him with a singular love?

O my soul, much has been said to persuade thee to faith; and if now thou believest thy part in those several actings of Christ, let thy faith take thee by the hand, and lead thee from one step to another; from his baptism to his temptations; from his temptations to his manifestations; and so on. Is not here fuel enough for love? Canst thou read the history of love, (for such is the history of Christ's life), and not be all on a flame?

Come, read again! There is nothing in Christ but what is lovely, winning, and drawing.

1. When he saw thee full of filth, he goes down into the waters of baptism, that he might prepare a way for the cleansing of thy polluted soul.

2. When he saw the devil ready to swallow thee up, he himself enters in the list, and overcomes him, that thou mightest overcome, and triumph with Christ in his glory.

3. When he saw thee in danger of death through thy unbelief, he condescends so far to succour thy weakness, as to manifest himself by several witnesses. Three in heaven, and three on earth; yea, he multiplies his three on earth to thousands of thousands: so many were the signs witnessing Christ, that the disciples which testified of them, could say, *If they should be written every one, the world could not contain the books that should be written.*

4. When he saw thee like the horse and mule, not having understanding, he came with his instructions, adding line unto line, and precept on precept, teaching and preaching the gospel of the kingdom; and sealing his truths with many miracles, that thou mayest believe, and in believing mightest have life through his name.

5. When he saw thee a sinner of the Gentiles, stranger from the commonwealth of Israel, and without God in the world, he sent his apostles and messengers abroad, and bade them preach the gospel to thee: 'Go to such a one in the dark corner of the world, an isle at such a distance, and set up my throne amongst that people, open the most precious cabinet of my love there; and amongst that people, tell such a soul that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom he is one.

6. When he saw thee cast down, and refusing thy own mercy, crying and saying, 'What! is it possible that Jesus Christ should send a message to such a dead dog as I am?' He then appeared, and even then spread his arms wide to receive thy soul: he cried, 'Come unto me, thou that art weary and heavy laden with sin, and I will give thee rest.'

7. When he saw thee in suspense, and heard thy complaint, 'Oh it is a hard passage, and a high ascent up to heaven!—Oh, what shall become of my poor soul!' He told thee that all his ways were ways of pleasantness, and all his paths peace; —that thou shouldst find by experience his yoke was easy, and his burden light.

8. When he saw the wretchedness of thy nature, and original pollution, he took upon him thy nature, and by this means took away thy original sin. Here is the lovely object! What is it but the absolute holiness of the nature of Christ? This is the fairest beauty that ever eye beheld: this is that compendium of all glories. Now if love be a motion and union of the appetite

to what is lovely, how shouldst thou flame forth in love upon the Lord Jesus Christ!—See, O my soul, here is the sum of all the particulars thou hast heard,—Christ loves thee, and Christ is lovely; his heart is set upon thee, who is a thousand times fairer than all the children of men. Doth not this double consideration, like a mighty loadstone, snatch thy heart unto it! 'It pleased thee, my Lord, to say to thy poor church, *Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me:*—But O let me say to thee, Turn thine eyes to me, that they may overcome me: my Lord, I would be thus ravished, I would be overcome; I would be thus out of myself, that I might be all in thee.—How chill and cold art thou in thy converses with Jesus Christ! Surely, had Christ's love been like this faint and feeble love of mine, I had been a damned wretch without all hope. O Christ, I am ashamed that I love thee so little; I perceive that loves are great, by all those actings in thy life: come, blow upon my garden, persuade me by the Spirit, that I may love thee; many sins are forgiven me, O that I may love thee much!'

Sect. VII.—*Of Joying in Jesus in that respect.*

Let us joy in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation during his life.

1. In order to this, let us contemplate this life of Christ, let us spend our frequent thoughts upon this blessed object; the reason we miss of our joys, is, because we are so little in contemplations of our Christ. It is said, 'that he pities us in our sorrows; but he delights in us, when we delight in him.' Certainly he would have us to delight in him; and to that purpose he way-lays our thoughts, that wheresoever we look, we shall still think on him: O my soul, cast thine eyes which way thou wilt, and thou shalt hardly look on any thing, but Christ Jesus hath taken the name of that very thing upon himself. What! is it day, and dost thou behold the sun?—he is called *the Sun of righteousness.* Or is it night, and dost thou behold the stars?—he is called a star; *there shall come a Star out of Jacob.* Or is it morning, and dost thou behold the morning star?—he is called, *the bright morning Star.* Or is it noon, and dost thou behold clear light all the world over?—he is that light *that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.* Come a little nearer: If thou lookest on the earth, and takest a view of the creatures about thee; seest thou the sheep?—*as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.* Or, seest thou a lamb?—*behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.* Seest thou a shepherd watching over his flock:—*I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.* Or seest thou a fountain, rivers, waters?—he is called a fountain: *In that day there shall be a Fountain opened*

to the house of David. Or seest thou a tree, good for food, or pleasant to the eye?—he is called *the Tree of life:* and, *as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons.* Seest thou a rose, a lily, any fair flower in a garden? —he is called a Rose, a Lily: *I am the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the valleys.* To come a little nearer yet; art thou adorning thyself, and takest a view of thy garments?—he is a garment: *put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.* Art thou eating meat, and takest a view of what is on thy table?—*he is the Bread of God, true Bread from heaven, the Bread of life.* Thus Christ way-lays our thoughts, that wheresoever we look, we should ever think of Christ. Now, I cannot think of Christ, or the life of Christ, of Christ preaching, or of Christ preached, but I must rejoice in Christ; as sometimes the apostle said, *Christ is preached, I therein rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.*

2. Let us upon good grounds hope our share in the life of Christ. Hope and joy go together: if I have but assured hope that Christ's life is mine, I cannot but rejoice therein. Look to this, O my soul: peruse again and again thy grounds of hope: do not slightly run them over; thou canst not be too sure of Christ. When Zaccheus in the sycamore tree heard but Christ's voice, *Zaccheus, make haste, and come down, for to-day I must abide in thy house;* O what haste made Zaccheus to receive Christ! He came down hastily, and received him joyfully. This offer of Christ to Zaccheus is thine as well as his, if thy hope be right:—Come down, poor soul, saith Christ, *This day must I abide in thy house.* Then what joy should there be in thy heart when Christ comes in, or when thou feelest Christ come in! The friend of the bridegroom rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. How much more may the bride herself rejoice!

3. Let us come up to more and more fruition of Christ: all other things work our delight but as they look towards this. Now in this fruition of Christ are contained these things: (1.) A propriety unto Christ; for, as a sick man doth not feel the joy of a sound man's health, so neither doth a stranger to Christ feel the joy of a believer in Christ. How should he joy in Christ that can make no claim to him? (2.) A possession of Christ. This exceedingly enlargeth our joy. O how sweet was Christ to the spouse, when she could say, *I am my beloved's, and my Beloved is mine.* Many are taken up with the joy and comfort of outward possessions, but Christ is better than all: in one Christ, is comprised every scattered comfort here below. Christ mine, (saith the soul) and all mine. O the usefulness of Christ to all believing souls? The scriptures are full of this, as appears by all his titles in scripture: he is our life, our light, our bread, our water, our milk, our wine; *His flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed.* He is our father, our brother, our friend, our hus-

band, our king, our priest, our prophet: he is our justification, our sanctification, our wisdom, our redemption: he is our peace, our mediation, our atonement, our reconciliation, our all in all. Alas! I look on myself, and I see I am nothing; I have nothing without Jesus Christ. Here is a temptation, I cannot resist it; here is a corruption I cannot overcome; here is a persecution, I cannot down with it: well, but Christ is mine, I have interest in Christ, and I have possession of Christ, and I find enough in Christ to supply all my wants.

Those that lived with him, *all rejoiced for the glorious things that were done by him.* And doth not thy heart leap within thee, O my soul? I cannot but check thee for thy deadness: it is said, that when *Christ was at the descent of the mount of olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice, and praise God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works that they had seen.* What! a multitude of disciples rejoicing in Christ's acts? And art thou not one amongst the multitude? If thou art a disciple, rejoice thou: surely it concerns thee as much as them; and therefore rejoice, lift up thy voice in harmony with the rest, rejoice, and again rejoice.

Sect. VIII.—*Of Calling on Jesus in that respect.*

Let us call on Jesus, or on God the Father in and through Jesus. Thus we read, that looking up to Jesus, or lifting up the eyes to Jesus, goes for prayer in God's book: *My prayer will I direct to thee,* saith David, *and will look up.* Faith in prayer, will often come out at the eye. Thus Stephen looked up to heaven; let us look up to Jesus by calling on him: now this calling on him contains prayer and praise.

1. We must pray that all these transactions of Jesus during his life, or during his ministry upon earth, may be ours: we hope it so, and we believe it to be so; but for all that, we must pray that it may be so. There is no contradiction betwixt hope, and faith, and prayer; Lord, I believe, yet help my unbelief; be it to me according to my faith, how weak soever.

2. We must praise God for all those passages in Christ's life. Thus did the multitude: *They praised God with a loud voice, saying, Blessed be the King that comes in the name of the Lord, peace in heaven, and glory in the highest!* What, my soul, hath Christ done this for thee? Was he made under the law to redeem thy soul, and adopt thee for his son, to the inheritance of heaven? Came he down from heaven, and travelled so many miles on earth, to woo and win thy heart? Spent he so many sermons, and so many miracles to work thee into faith? O how shouldst thou bless, and praise, and magnify his name! How shouldst thou break out into that blessed hymn; *To him that loved us, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, and*

his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Sect. IX.—*Of Conforming to Jesus in that respect.*

Let us conform to Jesus, as he acted for us in his life. Looking to Jesus, intends this especially: we must look as one looks to his pattern; as mariners at sea, that they may run a right course, keep an eye on that ship that bears the light: so in the race that is set before us, we must have our eye on Jesus, our blessed pattern. This must be our constant query, 'Is this the course that Jesus steered?'

In this particular I shall examine these three queries: 1. Wherein we must conform? 2. Why we must conform? 3. How we must conform to this life of Jesus?

For the first, I answer,—

We must not, cannot, conform to Christ in those works proper to his godhead; as in working miracles.—Nor need we to conform to Christ in some other particulars: as, in his voluntary poverty, and ceremonial performances.

But we must conform to Christ's life.

1. In respect of his judgment, will, affections; look we at his Spirit, observe what mind was in Jesus Christ, *Let the same mind be in you which was in Christ,* Phil. ii. 5. 1 Cor. ii. 16.

2. In respect of his virtues, graces, holiness. *Learn of me,* saith Christ, *for I am meek and lowly in heart.* I might instance in all other graces; for he had them all in fulness: *And of his fulness have we all received, grace for grace.*

3. In respect of his words. The very officers of the priest could say, *Never man spake like this man:* and sometimes *they all wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again.*

4. In respect of his carriage, conversation, close walking with God. The apostle sets forth Christ as an high priest, who was *holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners:* and in like manner saith Peter; *Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the virtues of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;*—that ye should in your lives and conversations express those graces and virtues which were so eminent in Jesus Christ; that you should, not only have them, but that you should hold them forth. The word signifies properly, to preach: so clearly should we express the virtues of Christ. As if our lives were so many sermons of the life of Christ.

As for all other saints, though they are imitable, yet with limitation, only so far as they express his life in their conversation: *Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ.*

For the second;—Why must we conform? upon what motives? I answer; 1. Because Christ hath done and suffered much to that end. If it had not been for thy imitation, I cannot think that Christ would have lived on earth so many years, to have done so many glorious and meritorious works.

2. Because Christ is the best and highest exemplar of holiness that ever the world had: hence we must needs conform to Christ. Christ is *the head of the body, the beginning, the first-born from the dead, in all things he hath the pre-eminence:* and the rule is general, that, that which is first and best in any kind, is the rule and measure of all the rest. Why, such is Christ; O then let him be the guide of our life, and of our manners.

3. Because Christ doth not only give us an example, but he doth succour and assist us by its easiness. Some sweetly observe, that Christ's piety (which we must imitate) was even, constant, unblameable, complying with civil society, without any prodigious instances of actions greater than the imitation of men. We are not commanded to imitate a life, whose story tells us of ecstasies in prayer, of abstractions of senses,—no; but a life of justice, piety, and devotion: and it is very remarkable, that besides the easiness of this imitation, there is a virtue and efficacy in the life of Christ: it may be, we think our way to heaven is troublesome, obscure, and full of objection: 'Well,' saith Christ, 'but mark my footsteps; come on, and tread where I have stood, and you shall find the virtue of my example will make all smooth and easy; you shall find the comforts of my company, you shall feel the virtue and influence of a perpetual guide.'

4. Because Christ in his word hath commanded us to follow his steps: *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.—And ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am; if I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet, for I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.—And as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy.* We must be holy as Christ is holy, yet still we must look at the holiness of Christ, as the sun, and root, and fountain; and that our holiness is but as a beam of that sun, but as a branch of that root, but as a stream of that fountain.

For the third, How must we conform to this life? I answer:—

1. Let us be humbled for our great unconformity to this copy. What an excellent pattern is here before us; and how far, how infinitely, do we come short! Alas! if Christ will not own me, unless he see his image written upon me, what will become of my poor soul? Why, Christ was meek, and humble, and lowly

in spirit; Christ even went about doing good: and now, when I come to examine my own heart according to this original, I am as opposite to Christ as hell to heaven. O wo is me! what a vast disproportion there is betwixt Christ's life and mine! Thus, O my soul, shouldst thou humble thyself; each morning, each prayer, each meditation, each self-examination, shouldst thou fetch new, fresh, clear, particular occasions of humiliation: as thus, lo there the evenness, gravity, holiness, heavenliness, of Jesus Christ; lo there the dear love, tender pity, constant industry, unwearied pains, self-denial, contempt of the world, in Jesus Christ; lo there those continual devout breathings of soul after God his Father's glory, after the immortal good of precious souls. O the sweet expressions, gracious conversation? O the blessed lustre of his divine soul! O the sweet countenance, sacred discourse, ravishing demeanour, winning deportment, of Jesus Christ! and now reflect I upon myself; O the wide disproportion of mine therefrom! I should punctually answer, perfectly resemble, accurately imitate, exactly conform to, this life of Christ: but, ah! my unevenness, lightness, vanity! ah, my deformity, slightness, execrableness! ah my sensuality, brutishness, devilishness! how clearly are these, and all my other enormities, discovered by the blessed life of Jesus!

2. Let us quicken our sluggish souls to conform to Christ. If this was one of the ends of Christ's coming, to destroy the works of the devil, to deface all Satan's works, especially his work in me, and to set his own stamp on my soul; how then should I but endeavour to conform! I read but of two ends of Christ's coming into the world in relation to us; whereof the first was to redeem his people, and the other was to purify his people: *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* The one is the work of his merit, which goeth upwards to the sanctification of his Father; the other is the work of his grace, which goeth downwards to the sanctification of his church: in the one he bestoweth his righteousness on us by imputation, in the other he fashioneth his image in us by renovation; and what, O my soul, wouldst thou destroy the end of Christ's coming in the flesh? Thus let us provoke our souls to this conformity; let us excite our faint, drooping, languishing affections, desires, endeavours. Let us with enlarged industry engage and encourage our backward spirits to fall upon this duty; let us come up higher towards it, or if possibly we may, completely to it; that the same mind, and mouth, and life, may be in us that was in Jesus Christ, that we may be found to walk after Christ, that we may tread in the very prints of the feet of Christ, that we may climb up after him into the same heavenly kingdom; that we may aspire continually towards him, and grow up to him, even to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

3. Let us regulate ourselves by the life of Christ; whatsoever action we go about, let us do it by this rule,—would Christ have done this? It is true, some things are expedient and lawful with us, which are not suitable to the person of Christ: *Marriage is honourable with all men, and the bed undefiled,* but it did not benefit his person. Writing of books is commendable with men, because, like Abel, being dead, they may still speak; but it would have been derogatory to the person and office of Christ: for it is his prerogative to be in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, to be present to all his members; to teach by power, and not by ministry; to write his law in the hearts of his people, and to make them his epistle. In these things we must only respect the allowance of Christ, but in other things we must reflect upon the example of Christ, as, 1. In sinful acts eschewed by Christ. 2. In moral duties that were done by him.

(1.) In sinful acts eschewed by Christ, as when I am tempted to sin, then am I to reason thus with myself: would my blessed Saviour, if he were upon earth, do thus and thus? If he were to live again, would he live after this manner? Would this be his language? would such speech as this drop from his lips?

(2.) In case of moral obedience, concerning which we have both his pattern and precept. I look upon Christ as my rule; and I question thus, Did Christ frequently pray with his disciples, and alone? And shall I never in my family, or in my closet, think upon God? Did Christ shew mercy to his very enemies? And shall I be cruel to Christ's members? O my soul, look in all thy sins, and in all thy duties, to thy original, and measure them by the holiness of Christ! Whether in avoiding sin, or in doing duty, think—what would my blessed Saviour do in this case, or what did he in the like case, when he was upon earth? If we had these thoughts every day, if Christ were continually before our eyes, if in all we do or speak we should still muse on this—what would Jesus Christ say, if he were here? it would be a blessed means of living in comfort, and spiritual conformity to the commands of God.

Let us look fixedly on Jesus Christ; let us keep our spiritual eyes still on the pattern, until we feel ourselves conforming to it; let us set the copy of Christ's life in our view, and let us look upon it with the eye of reason, and with the eye of faith.

But how should we keep the eye of our faith on this blessed object, until we feel this conformity in us? I answer,—

1. Let us set apart some times on purpose: the day begins to close; if together with our closet prayer we would fall on this duty of looking unto Jesus by lively faith, how blessed a season might this be?

2. Let us remove hinderances: Satan labours to hinder the soul from beholding Christ with the dust of the world. The

god of this world blinds the eyes of men: O take heed of fixing our eyes on this world! Our own corruptions are also great hinderances to this view of Christ: away with all carnal passions, sinful desires; unless the soul be spiritual, it can never behold spiritual things.

3. Let us fix our eyes only on this blessed object; a moving eye sees nothing clearly: when the angels are said to look into these things, the word signifies, that they look into them narrowly; as they who bowing or stooping down look into a thing, so should we look narrowly into the life of Christ; our eye of faith should be set upon it in a steady manner, as if we forgot all the things behind, and had no other business in the world.

4. Let us look on Christ with a craving eye, with an humble expectation to receive a supply of grace. Lord, thou art not only anointed with the oil of gladness above thy fellows, but for thy fellows; I am earthly-minded, but thou art heavenly; I am full of lusts, but the image of God is perfect in thee; thou art the fountain of all grace, an head of all influence, as well as of eminence; thou art not only above me, but thou hast all grace for me: O give me some portion of thy meekness, lowliness, heavenly-mindedness, and of all the other graces of thy Spirit. Surely thou art an heaven of grace, full of bright shining stars: O that of that fulness thou wouldst give me to receive grace for grace.

5. Be ye assured that our prayer (if it be in faith) is even now heard; never any came to Christ with strong expectations to receive grace, or any benefit prayed for, that was turned empty away; besides, Christ hath engaged himself by promise, to make us like himself: *as he which hath called us is holy, so should* (yea, and so shall) *we be holy in all manner of conversation.* O let us build on his gracious promise: heaven and earth shall pass away before one tittle of his word shall fail; only understand we that our conformity must be gradual: *We all with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory,* i. e. from grace to grace; or from glory inchoate in obedience, to glory consummate in heaven.

6. If, notwithstanding all this, we feel not for the present this conformity in us, at least in such a degree; let us act over the same particulars again: the gifts of grace are therefore communicated by degrees, that we might be taken off from living upon a received stock of grace, and that we might still be running to the spring; we have continual need of Christ's letting out grace into our hearts, and therefore we must wait at the well-head, Christ; we must look on Christ as appointed on purpose by his Father to be the beginner and finisher of our holiness; and we must believe that he will never leave that work imperfect, whereunto he is ordained of the Father. O then

be not weary of this work, until he accomplish the desires of thy soul.

I have now done with this subject; only, before I finish, one word more. I deny not other helps; but amongst them all, if I would make choice which to call upon, that I may become more and more holy, I would set before me this glass; *i. e.* Christ's holy life, the great exemplar of holiness; and this image we lost through our sin, and to this image we should endeavour to be restored by imitation; and how should this be done but by looking on Christ as our pattern? In this respect I charge thee, O my soul (for to what purpose should I charge others, if I begin not at home?) that thou make conscience of this evangelical duty: O be much in the exercise of it; not only in the day, but when night comes, and thou liest down on thy bed, let thy pillow be as Christ's bosom, in which John the beloved disciple was said to lean; there lean thou with John; thus mayest thou lie down in peace, and the Lord only will make thee to dwell in safety; and when day returns again, have this in mind, yea, in all thy thoughts, words, and deeds, even look unto Jesus as thy holy exemplar: say to thyself, If Christ my Saviour were now upon earth, would these be his thoughts, words, and deeds? would he be thus disposed as I now feel myself? would he speak these words that I am now uttering? would he do this that I am now putting my hand unto? O let me not yield myself to any thought, word, or action, which Jesus would be ashamed to own: yea, if it were possible, going and standing, sitting and lying, eating and drinking, speaking and holding thy peace, by thyself or in company, cast an eye upon Jesus, for by this means thou canst not chuse but love him more, and joy in him more, and trust in him more, and be more and more familiar with him, and draw more and more grace, and virtue, and sweetness, from him: O let this be thy wisdom, to think much of Christ, so as to provoke thee to imitation; then shalt thou learn to contemn the world, to do good to all, to injure no man, to suffer wrong patiently, yea, to pray for those that despitefully use thee, and persecute thee; then shalt thou learn to "bear about in thy body the dying of our Lord Jesus Christ, that the life of Jesus may be made manifest in thy body." This is to follow Christ's steps: he descended from heaven to earth for thy sake; do thou trample on earthly things, *seek after the kingdom of God and his righteousness*, for thy own sake: though the world be sweet, yet Christ is sweeter; though the world prove bitter, yet Christ sustained the bitterness of it for thee: and now he speaks to thee, as he did to Peter, Andrew, James, and John, *Come, follow me*; O do not faint in the way, lest thou lose thy place in thy country, that kingdom of glory.

LOOKING UNTO JESUS,

IN HIS DEATH.

BOOK V.

CHAP. I.

SECT. I.—*Of the Day of Christ's Sufferings, divided into Parts and Hours.*

THE Sun of righteousness, that arose with healing, we shall now see go down in a ruddy cloud. And in this piece, as in the former, we must first lay down the object, and then direct you to look upon it.

The object is Jesus, carrying on the work of man's salvation during the time of his sufferings; we shall observe them, as they were carried on successively in those few hours of his passion and death.

The whole time of these last sufferings of Christ, I shall reduce to somewhat less than one natural day; day before us, consisting of twenty-four hours; and begin with the evening, according to the beginning of natural days from the creation, (as it is said, *The evening and the morning made the first day.)* In this revolution of time, I shall observe these several passages.—

1. About six in the evening, Christ celebrated and eat the Passover with his disciples, at which time he instituted the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and this continued till the eighth hour.

2. About eight in the evening, he washed the disciples' feet, and then leaning on the table, pointed out Judas that should betray him; and this continued until the ninth hour.

3. About nine in the evening, (the second watch in the night,) Judas went from the disciples; and in the mean time, Christ made that spiritual sermon, and afterwards that spiritual prayer, recited by John, chap. xiv. xv. xvi. xvii. and this (together with a psalm they sung) continued at least until the tenth hour. That which concerns his passion, follows immediately upon this; and that only I shall take notice in my following discourse.

This passion of Christ I shall divide between the night and day. 1. For the night, and his sufferings therein, we may observe these periods:

1. From ten to twelve, he goes over the brook Cedron, to the garden of Gethsemane, where he prayed earnestly, and sweat blood.

2. From twelve to three, he is betrayed, bound, brought to Jerusalem, and carried into the house of Annas, the chief priest.

3. From three till six, they led him from Annas to Caiaphas, when he and all the priests of Jerusalem set upon Jesus Christ; and there it was that Peter denied Christ, and at last the whole Sanhedrim gave their consent to Christ's condemnation.

4. At six in the morning, about sun-rising, our Saviour was brought unto Pilate, and Judas Iscariot hanged himself.—About seven, Christ is carried to Herod, who the year before had put John the Baptist to death.—At eight, our Saviour is returned to Pilate, who propounded to the Jews, whether they would have Jesus or Barnabas loosed.—About the ninth, (which the Jews call the third hour of the day,) Christ was whipped and crowned with thorns.—About ten, Pontius Pilate brought forth Jesus out of the common-hall, saying, *Behold the man?* and then, in the place called Gabbatha, publicly condemned him to be crucified. —About eleven, our Saviour carried his cross, and was brought to the place called Golgotha, where he was fastened on the cross, and lifted up, *as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness.*—About twelve, (which the Jews call the sixth hour,) that supernatural eclipse of the sun happened.—And about three in the afternoon, which the Jews call the ninth hour,) the sun now beginning to receive his light, Christ cried, *It is finished!* and commending his Spirit into his Father's hands, gave up the Ghost.—I shall add to these; that about four in the afternoon, our blessed Saviour was pierced with a spear.—And about five, (which the Jews call the eleventh, and the last hour of the day,) he was buried by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus.—So that in this round of our natural day, you see the wonderful transaction of Christ's sufferings.

Sect. II.—*Of the Brook over which Christ passed.*

The first passage of that night, was Christ's going over the brook Cedron, to the garden of Gethsemane. *When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into which he entered, and his disciples.*

In this passage observe we these particulars. 1. The river over which they passed. 2. The garden into which they entered. 3. The prayer he made. 4. The agonies he suffered.

1. He and his disciples went over the brook Cedron. So it was called, say some, from the cedars that grew along the banks; or, say others, from the darkness of the valley, so *kader* signifies

darkness; and this was done to fulfil a prophecy: *He shall drink of the brook in the way.* By the brook, we may understand mystically the wrath of God, and rage of men, the afflictions which befell Jesus Christ; and by his drinking of the brook, Christ's enduring afflictions.

2. In the way, he hath a serious conference with his disciples: so the evangelist; *And when they had sung an hymn, they went out towards the mount of Olives, and then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night; for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.* Christ now begins the story of his passion, *the Shepherd shall be smitten;* and he proves it from the prophecy of the prophet Zechariah, xiii. 7. *Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow.—Smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered abroad.* God the Father is here brought in, as drawing and whetting his sword, and calling upon it to do execution against Jesus Christ. Christ's sufferings were long since resolved on in the councils of heaven; and now in the way, the only-begotten Son, which lay in the bosom of his Father, reveals this story; he tells his disciples, *It is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered.*

3. The disciples hearing this, are amazed; Peter, who seems boldest, speaks first: *Though all men should be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.* O rash presumption! it appears in these particulars:—1. Peter prefers himself before the rest, as if all other disciples had been weak, and he only strong: *Though all should be offended, yet will not I.* 2. Peter contradicts Christ, with a few bragging words; as if he had said, 'What, though Zechary hath said it, yet I will never do it; *Though I should die with thee, I will not deny thee.*' 3. Peter never mentions God's assistance; whereas the apostle's rule is, *Ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this and that:* so Peter should have said, 'By God's assistance I will not be offended, by the Lord's help I will not deny thee.'

4. Ah, my brethren! let us remember we are pilgrims and strangers upon earth, and our way lies over the brook Cedron; we cannot expect to enter with Christ into glory, but we must first *drink of the brook in the way;* that is, we must endure many afflictions, variety of afflictions. You will say, *This is an hard saying, who can hear it?* When Jesus told his disciples of his sufferings to be accomplished at Jerusalem, Peter takes the boldness to dehort his Master, *Be it far from thee, Lord, this shall not be unto thee:* Jesus thereupon calls him Satan, meaning that no greater contradictions can be offered to the designs of God, than to dissuade us from sufferings. There is too much of Peter's humour amongst us; O, this doctrine of afflictions will not down with Antinomians; and hence we believe

we have our congregations so thin, in comparison of some of theirs; they that can break off the yoke of obedience, and present heaven in the midst of flowers, and offer great liberty of living under sin, shall have their schools filled with disciples; but they that preach the cross, and sufferings, and afflictions, and strictness of an holy life, shall have the lot of their blessed Lord; that is, they shall be ill thought of, and deserted, and railed against. Well, but if this be the way that Christ hath led us, let us follow him over the brook.

Sect. III.—*Of the Garden into which Christ entered.*

Matthew relates it thus: *Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane;* that is, a valley of fatness: certainly, it was a most fruitful and pleasant place, seated at the foot of the mount of Olives; accordingly John relates it thus: *Jesus went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden.* I believe it is not without reason, that our Saviour goes into a garden. 1. Because gardens are solitary places, fit for meditation and prayer; to this end, we find Christ sometimes on a mountain, and sometimes in a garden. 2. Because gardens are places fit for repose and rest, when Christ was weary with preaching, working of miracles, and doing acts of grace in Jerusalem, then he retires into this garden. 3. Because a garden was the place wherein we fell, and therefore Christ made choice of a garden, to begin the work of our redemption. 4. Christ goes into this garden, that his enemies might the more easily find him out; the evangelist tells us, *Judas, which betrayed him, knew the place, for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples:* sure then he went not thither to hide himself; but rather to expose himself, to appear first in the field, and to expect his enemies. Thus it appears to all the world, that Christ's death was voluntary. *He poureth forth his soul unto death,* saith the prophet; *He gave himself for our sins,* saith the apostle; nay, himself tells us, *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life: no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again.*

Sect. IV.—*Of the Prayer that Christ there made.*

Jesus entering the garden, left his disciples at the entrance of it, calling with him Peter, James, and John; they only saw his transfiguration, the earnest of his future glory, and therefore his pleasure was, that they only should see of how great glory he would disrobe himself, for our sakes.—

He betakes himself to his great antidote, which himself prescribed to all the world: he prays his heavenly Father; he

kneels down; and not only so, but falls flat upon the ground; he prays with an intension great as his sorrow, and yet with a submission so ready, as if the cup had been the most indifferent thing in the world. The form of his prayer ran thus, *O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.* In his prayer observe we these particulars: 1. The person to whom he prays, *O my Father.* 2. The matter for which he prays; *let this cup pass from me.* 3. The limitation of this prayer; *if it be possible, and if it be thy will.*

1. For the person to whom he prays; it is his Father. As Christ prayed not in his godhead, but according to his manhood; so neither prayed he to himself as God, but to the Father, the first person of the godhead.

2. For the matter of his prayer, *Let this cup pass from me,* some interpret thus: "Let this cup pass from me; though I must taste it, yet O that I may not be too long!" That which leads unto this last interpretation, is that of the apostle: *Christ, in the days of his flesh, offered up prayers and supplications with strong cries and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death; and he was heard in that which he feared,* Heb. v. 7. How was he heard? not in the removal of the cup, for he drank it all up; but in respect of the tedious annoyance; for though it made him sweat drops of blood, though it laid him dead in his grave, yet presently, within the space of forty hours, he revived, and awaked, as a giant refreshed with wine: and so it passed from him, as he prayed, in a very short time; and by that short death, he purchased to his people everlasting life.

3. For the limitation of his prayer; *If it be possible, if it be thy will.* He knows what is his Father's will, and he prays accordingly, and is willing to submit unto it; if the passing of the cup be according to the last interpretation, we shall need none of those many distinctions to reconcile the will of God and Christ. *If it be possible,* signifies the earnestness of the prayer; and, *If it be thy will,* the submission of Christ unto his Father: the prayer is short, but sweet. How many things needful to a prayer do we find concentred in this! Here is humility of spirit, lowliness of deportment, importunity of desire, a fervent heart, a lawful matter, and a resignation to the will of God. Some think this the most fervent prayer that ever Christ made on earth: *If it be possible, let this cup pass from me.* And, I think it was the greatest submission to the will of God, that ever was found upon the earth; for whether the cup might pass or not pass, he leaves it to his Father; *nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt:* as if he had said, 'Though in this cup are many ingredients, it is full red, and hath in it many dregs, and I know I must drink, and suck out the very utmost dreg; yet, whether it shall pass from me in that short time, or continue with

me a long time, I leave to thy will: I see, in respect of my humanity, there is in me flesh and blood; I cannot but fear the wrath of God; and therefore I pray thus earnestly unto my God: *O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.*

But what was there in the cup, that made Christ pray thus earnestly that it might pass from him? I answer—

1. The great pain that he must endure; the buffetings, whippings, bleedings, crucifyings; all the torments from first to last, throughout all his body; all these now came into his mind, and all these were put into the cup of which he must drink.

2. The great shame that he must undergo. Now came into his thoughts, his apprehending, binding, judging, scorning, reviling, condemning; and, O, what a bloody blush comes into the face of Christ, whilst in the cup he sees these ingredients!

3. The neglect of men, notwithstanding both his pain and shame. I look upon this as a greater cut to the heart of Christ, than both the former; when he considered, that after all his sufferings and reproaches, few would regard. This was a bitter ingredient! Naturally men desire, if they cannot be delivered, yet to be pitied; but when it comes to this, that a poor wretch is under many sufferings, and finds none to regard, it is an heavy case; hence was Christ's complaint: *Have ye no regard, O all ye that pass by the way? Consider, and behold if ever there were sorrow like unto my sorrow!* Christ complains not of the sharp pains he endured, but of this, *Have ye no regard?* He cries not out, 'O deliver me, and save me;' but, 'O consider and regard me:' as if he had said, 'All that I suffer, I am contented with, I regard it not; only this troubles me, that you will not regard: it is for you that I endure all this; and do you so look upon it, as if it nothing at all concerned you? Christ is willing to redeem us with his own precious blood; but he saw many to pass by without any regard, yea, ready to trample his precious blood under their feet, and *to account the blood of the covenant an unholy thing:* this was another spear in the heart of Christ, a bitter ingredient in this cup.

4. The guilt of sin which he was now to undergo; *upon him was laid the iniquity of us all.* All the sins of all the world, from the first creation to the last judgment, were laid on him: O what a weight was this! Surely one sin is like a talent of lead: O, then, what were so many thousands of millions! The very earth itself groans under the weight of sin until this day. David cried out, that his iniquities were 'a burden too heavy for him to bear.' Nay, God himself complains, *Behold, I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves.* Then no wonder if Christ, bearing all the sins of Jews and gentiles, bond and free, cry out, *My soul is heavy;* for sin was heavy on his soul:—*Christ, his own self, bare our sins in his own body*

on the tree. How bare our sins on the tree, but by his sufferings? —*And he hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.* How laid on him, but by imputation?—*And he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin.* How made sin for us? Surely there was in Christ no fundamental guilt; no, but he was made sin by imputation: he was our surety, and so our sins were laid on him, in order to punishment: as if now in the garden, he had said to his Father, 'Thou hast given me a body; as I have taken the debts and sins of all the world upon me, come now, and arrest me as the only paymaster. Lo here I am, to do and suffer for their sins whatsoever thou pleasest,' *Psal.* xl. 6, 7, 8. *Heb.* x. 4—9. Now this was no small matter; little do we know or consider, what is the weight and guilt of sin. And this was another ingredient in Christ's cup.

5. The power and malice of Satan: the devil had full leave; not as it was with Job, *Do what thou wilt, but save his life.* No, he had a commission without any such limitation; the whole power of darkness was let loose to afflict him, as far as possibly he could; and this our Saviour intimates, when he saith, that *the prince of this world cometh.* Now was it that the word must be accomplished, *Thou shalt bruise his heel.* If we look on the devil in respect of his evil nature, he is compared to *a roaring lion:* not only is he a lion, but a roaring lion; his disposition to do mischief, is always wound up to the height; and if we look on the devil in respect of his power, there is no part of our souls or bodies that he cannot reach; the apostle describing his power, gives him names above the highest comparisons; as *principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness above.* Devils are not only called princes, but *principalities;* not only mighty, but *powers;* not only rulers of a part, but of *all the darkness of all this world;* not only wicked spirits, but *spiritual wickedness;* not only about us, but *above us;* they hang over our heads continually: you know what a disadvantage it is to have your enemy get the upper ground; and this they have naturally, and always. O then, what a combat must this be, when all the power, and all the malice, of all the devils in hell, should, by the permission of God, arm themselves against the Son of God. Surely this was a bitter ingredient in Christ's cup.

6. The wrath of God himself: this, above all, was the most bitter dreg; it lay in the bottom, and Christ must drink it also. *The Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger:* God afflicts some in his mercy and some in anger; this was in his anger: and yet in his anger God is not alike to all; some he afflicts in his more gentle and mild, others in his fierce anger; this was in the very fierceness of his anger. Christ saw himself bearing the sins of all, and standing before the judgment-seat of God; to this end, are those words, *Now is the judgment of this world, and the prince of this world shall be cast out.* Now is

the judgment of this world; as if he had said, 'Now I see God sitting in judgment upon the world; and as a right representative of all the world, here I stand before his tribunal, ready to undergo all the punishment due to them for their sins: there is no other way to save their souls, and to satisfy justice, but that the fire of thy indignation should kindle against me; as if he had said, 'I know it is *a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God:* I know *God is a consuming fire; who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.* But for this end came I into the world. O my Father, I will drink this cup. Lo here an open breast; come, prepare the armoury of thy wrath, and herein shoot all the arrows of revenge.—And yet, O my Father, let me not be swallowed up by thy wrath; there is in me flesh and blood, in respect of my humanity, and *my flesh trembleth for fear of thee; I am afraid of thy judgments:* O! if it be possible, *if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.*'

Sect. V.—*Of the Agonies that Christ suffered.*

Christ's passion in the garden, was either before, or at, his apprehension; his passion before is declared, 1. By his sorrow. 2. By his sweat.

1. For his sorrow. The evangelists diversly relate it: *He began to be sorrowful and very heavy,* said Matthew: *He began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy,* saith Mark: *And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly,* saith Luke: *Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour,* saith John. All avow this sorrow to be great, and so it is confessed by Christ himself: *Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.* Ah, Christians! who can speak out this sorrow? *The Spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?* Christ's soul is *sorrowful;* or, if that be too flat, his soul is *exceeding sorrowful;* or, if that language be too low, his soul is exceeding sorrowful, *even unto death;* such, and so great, as that which is used to be at the very point of death; and such as were able to bring death itself, had not Christ been reserved to an heavier punishment. Many a sorrowful soul have been in the world; but the like sorrow to this, was never since the creation. Surely the bodily torments of the cross, were inferior to this agony of his soul: it was a sorrow unspeakable.

2. *And his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.* 1. *His sweat was as it were blood.* Here is the first step; his sweat was a wonderful sweat, not a sweat of water, but of red gore-blood.

3. *Great drops of blood,* θρόμβοι αἵματος. This bloody sweat of Christ, came not from him in small dews, but in great drops; they were drops, and *great drops of blood,* thick drops; and hence it is concluded as preternatural: for though in faint bodies, a subtile thin blood, like sweat, may pass through the pores of the skin; that through the same pores, thick and great drops of blood should issue out, could not be without a miracle.

4. They were *great drops of blood falling down to the ground:* great drops, and those so many, that they went through his apparel, streaming down to the ground. Now was it, that his garments were dyed with crimson. That of the prophet, though spoken in another sense, yet in some respect may be applied to this: *Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth the wine-fat?* O what a sight was here! His head and members are all on a bloody sweat, his sweat trickles down to the ground. O happy garden, watered with such tears of blood! how much better are these rivers than Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus; yea, than all the waters of Israel; yea, than all those rivers that water the garden of Eden!—

Thus far of Christ's passion before his apprehension. And now we may suppose it about midnight, the very time which Christ called *the hour and power of darkness.* What followed from twelve till three at night, we shall discover in the next section.

Sect. VI.—*Of Judas's Treason, Christ's Apprehension, Binding, and Leading unto Annas.*

By this time, the traitor Judas was arrived at Gethsemane, and being near the garden door, Jesus goes to his disciples, and calls them from their sleep: by an irony (as some think) he bids them 'Sleep on now, and take their rest;' meaning, if they could; but withal adds, *Behold the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners; arise, let us be going, behold he is at hand that doth betray me.* That it might appear he undertook his sufferings with choice, he not only refused to fly, but calls his apostles to rise, that they might meet his murderers. And now they come *with swords and staves*; or, as John adds, *with lanterns and torches, and (Judas going before them, and drawing near unto Jesus to kiss him) they took him, and bound him, and led him away to Annas first.*

In this period, I shall observe; 1. Judas's treason. 2. Christ's apprehension. 3. Christ's binding. 4. Christ's leading to Annas.

1. Judas's treason: *And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.* This traitor is not a disciple only, but an apostle; not one of the seventy, but one

of the twelve. Augustine speaks of many offices of love, that Christ had done to Judas in an especial manner; he had called him to be an apostle, made him his friend, his familiar, caused him to eat of his bread, and sit at his table. And that now Judas should betray Christ; how doth this add to the sufferings of Christ! Behold a multitude, and Judas in the front. The evangelist gives the reason of this, that he might have the better opportunity to kiss him; this was the sign he gave the rout: *Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he, lay hold on him.* He begins war with a kiss, and breaks the peace of his Lord by a symbol of kindness. Jesus takes this ill; *What, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?* as if he had said, 'What! dost thou make the seal of love, the sign of treachery? What a friendly reproof is here!

2. For Christ's apprehension: *Then came they and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.* Before they took him, he himself begins the inquiry, and leads them into their errand; he tells them, that he was Jesus of Nazareth, whom they sought: this was but a breath, a meek and gentle word; yet had it greater strength in it than the voice of thunder; for God was in that still voice, and it struck them to the ground. And yet he suffers them to rise again, and they still persist in their inquiry after him: he tells them once more, *I am he;* he offers himself to be sacrificed; only he sets them their bounds, and therefore he secures his apostles to be witnesses of his sufferings. In this work of redemption, no man must have an active share besides himself; he alone was to tread the wine-press: *If therefore ye seek me,* saith Christ, *let these go their way.* Thus he permits himself to be taken, but not his disciples.

3. For Christ's binding. The evangelist tells us, that *the band, and the captain, and the officers of the Jews, took Jesus, and bound him,* ἔδησαν, they bound his hands with cords; certainly they wanted no malice, and now they wanted no power, for the Lord had given himself into their hands. Binding argues baseness: fools and slaves were accustomed to be bound, and so were thieves; but is our Saviour numbered amongst any of these? O yes! *In that same hour said Jesus to the multitude, Are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves?* O wonderful condescension of Christ! He that was eminently just, is reputed a thief; he that was equal with God, is become a servant; he that was stronger than Samson, is bound with cords, and, as a lamb, continues bound for the slaughter; and thus began our liberty from sin and death. Christ was faster bound with his cords of love, than with iron fetters; his love was strong as death; it overcame him who is invincible, and bound him who is omnipotent: the Jews' cords were but the symbols and figures; but the dear love, the tender bowels of Jesus Christ, were the things signified.

4. For his leading to Annas. John records, that *they led him to Annas first, for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, who was the high-priest that same year.* 1. They led him away; ἀπήγαγον, they snatched, haled him from the garden back again to Jerusalem, over the brook Cedron.—2. They led him first to Annas; he was chief of the Sanhedrim, father-in-law to Caiaphas, and high-priest the next year following.

Come, Christians, let us lay our hands upon our hearts, and cry, 'O my pride! O my covetousness! O my malice and revenge! O my unbelief! O my unthankfulness! O my uncharitableness to the needy members of Christ! These were the rout, these were they that led, and dragged, and drew Jesus (as it were) by the hair of his head; these were they that pulled him forwards, and shewed him in triumph to that bloody Annas; nay, these were the Judas, Jews, Annas, and all. O that ever I should lodge within me such sins, such betrayers, such murderers of Jesus Christ!'

We may now suppose it about the third hour, or the last watch. In the gospel it is called the fourth watch of the night, the morning watch, which continueth until the morning.

Sect. VII.—*Of Christ's Examination and Condemnation.*

Now it was that they led him from Annas to Caiaphas; and presently a council is called of the high priests, scribes, and elders; these were the greatest, gravest, learnedst, wisest men amongst them, and they all conspire to judge him, who is the great Judge both of quick and dead. In their proceedings we may observe, 1. The examination of the high-priest. 2. The smiting of one of the servants. 3. The accusations of the witnesses. 4. The sentence of the judges. 5. The denial of Peter. 6. The abuses of the attendants.

1. For the examination of the high-priest: *The high-priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine.* (1.) Of his disciples. What the questions were, is not expressed; and to them he *answered nothing.*

(2.) He asked him of his doctrine.—And to this question our Saviour answers; (O how wisely!) *I spoke openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing: why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them; behold, they know what I said.* As if he had said, I appeal to the testimony of the enemies themselves. I tell the truth; I spake nothing in secret; that is, nothing in the least manner tending to sedition. Ask these mine enemies, these who have apprenended, and bound, and brought me hither: they know what I have said; let them speak, if they can, wherein I have transgressed the law

2. For the stroke given Christ. *One of the officers which stood by, struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high-priest so?* That holy face, which was designed to be the object of heaven, was now smitten in the presence of a judge; and howsoever the assembly was full, yet not one amongst them all reproved the fact, or spake a word for Christ.

If a subject should but lift up his hand against the son of an earthly sovereign, would he not be accounted worthy of punishment? How much more in this case, when the hand is lifted up against the King of kings, and Lord of lords!

Come, look upon this lively and lovely picture of patience; he was struck on the face, but he was never moved in his heart. Notwithstanding the abuse, he shewed all mildness and gentleness towards his enemies. O what art thou that canst not bear a distasteful speech, that canst not put up with the smallest offence! Come, learn of Christ. If ever we mean to have a share in his sufferings, let us conform to him in meekness and patience.

3. For the accusation of the witnesses. He is falsely charged with the things that he never knew. In his accusation I observe these things: 1. That they sought false witnesses; for true witnesses they could have none: *Now the chief priests and elders, and all the council, sought false witnesses against Jesus to put him to death.* They were resolved in a former council that he should not live; and now palliating their design, they seek out for witnesses. 2. *Though many false witnesses came in to testify against him, yet they found none, because their witnesses did not agree together.* The judges seek out for witnesses, the witnesses for proof, those proofs for unity and consent, and nothing was ready for their purpose. 3. At last, after many attempts, *came two false witnesses, and said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.* They accuse him for a figurative speech, which they could not understand.

Observe their false report of the words he had spoken: he said not, *I am able to destroy this temple of God, and to build it in three days;* but, *destroy ye this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.* The allegation differs from the truth in these particulars: (1.) *I am able to destroy,* say they; *destroy ye,* saith Christ. (2.) *I am able to destroy this temple of God,* say they; but, *destroy ye this temple,* saith Christ; simply *this temple,* without addition, (3.) *I am able to destroy this temple of God, and to build it in three days,* say they; *destroy ye this temple, and in three days I will raise it up,* saith Christ. He spoke not of building an external temple, but of raising up his own body. These were the accusations of the false witnesses, to all which Jesus answered nothing. But, (4.) Another accusation is brought in. Caiaphas had a reserve, which he knew

should do the business in that assembly. *I adjure thee,* says he, *by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.* The holy Jesus being adjured by so sacred a name, would not now refuse an answer, but confessed himself to be *the Christ, the Son of the living God.* And this the high-priest was pleased (as the design was laid) to call *blasphemy;* and in token thereof he rends his clothes, prophetically signifying, that the priesthood should be rent from himself.

4. For the sentence of these judges: Caiaphas, prejudging all the Sanhedrim, in declaring Jesus to have spoken blasphemy, and the fact to be notorious, he then asked their votes, *What think ye? And they answered and said, He is guilty of death.* They durst not deny what Caiaphas had said; they knew his faction was very potent, and his malice great, and his heart was set upon the business, and therefore they all say, as he would have them, *He is guilty of death.* But they had no power at that time to inflict death, they only declared him worthy of death.

5. For Peter's denial. While these things were thus acting, a damsel comes to him, and tells him, *Thou wast with Jesus of Galilee*: and then another maid tells the bystanders, *This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth.* And after a while, they that stood by spake themselves, *Surely thou art one of them, for thy speech betrayeth thee:* as if he had said, Thy very idiom declares thee to be a Galilean. Peter thus surprised, shamefully denies his Lord; and, 1. He doth it with a kind of subterfuge, *I know not what thou sayest.* He seems to elude the accusation with this evasion—I know not thy meaning. 2. At the next turn, he goes on *denying Christ with an oath: I know not the man.* And, lastly, he aggravates his sin so far, that he denies his Lord with *cursing and swearing, I know not the man.* Here's a lie, an oath, and a curse. O Peter, is the man so vile, that thou wilt not own him? Hadst thou not before confessed him to be the Christ, the Son of the living God? and dost thou not know him to be man, as well as God? Is not this the God-man, that called thee and thy brother Andrew at the sea of Galilee, saying, *Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men?* Is not this he whom thou sawest on mount Tabor, shining more gloriously than the sun? Is not this he whom thou sawest walking on the water, and to whom thou saidst, *Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water?* How is it then that thou sayst, *I know not the man?* Surely here's a sad example of human infirmity; and withal, a blessed example of repentance. No sooner the cock crew, and Christ gave a look on Peter, but he goes out, and weeps bitterly.

Let us learn hence to think modestly and soberly of ourselves: *Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall.* If Peter could first dissemble, and then lie, and then forswear, and then blaspheme and curse; O let us not be high-minded, but fear.—

And in case we fall indeed, as Peter did, yet let us not despair, as Judas did; but still, upon our repentance, let us trust in God.

6. For the abuses the base attendants offered to Christ; the evangelist tells us, *Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him, and others smote him with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee?* And, as Luke adds, *Many other things blasphemously spake they against him.*

(1.) They spit in his face. This was accounted among the Jews a matter of great infamy and reproach.

(2.) They buffet him. We heard before, that one of the officers struck Jesus with the palm of his hand; but now they buffet him.

(3.) They covered his face, *Mark* xiv. 65. Several reasons are rendered for it; that they might smite him more boldly, and without shame.

(4.) They smote him with the palms of their hands, saying, *Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee?* Some reckon these taunts among the bitterest passages of his passion. Nothing is more miserable, even to the greatest misery, than to see itself scorned of enemies.

Consider, Christians, whether we had not a hand in these abuses. (1.) They spit in the face of Christ, who defile his image in their souls. (2.) They buffet him, who persecute Christ in his members: *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* (3.) They mock and scoff at Christ, who scorn his messengers. *He that despiseth you, despiseth me,* saith Christ. O that we would lay these things to our hearts, and observe wherein we stand guilty of these sins, that we may repent. You that take your name from Christ, how should you admire the immensity of this love of Christ! Was it a small thing that the wisdom of God should become the foolishness of men, and scorn of men, and contempt of the world, for your sin's sake? O think of this!

And now the dismal night is done, what remains but that we follow Christ, and observe him in his sufferings the next day. The psalmist tells us, *Sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning:* only Christ can find none of this joy neither morning nor evening; for after a dismal night, he meets with as dark a day.

CHAP. II.

Sect. I.—*Of Christ's Indictment, and Judas's fearful End.*

About six in the morning, Jesus was brought unto Pilate's house. *Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the judgment-*

hall, and it was early.—When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: and when they had bound him, and led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor; then Judas which had betrayed him, hanged himself. O the readiness of our nature to evil! When the Israelites would sacrifice to the golden calf, they rose up early in the morning. If God leave us to ourselves, we are as ready to practise mischief as the fire is to burn. The transactions of this hour I shall consider in these two passages,—Christ's indictment, and Judas's fearful end.

In Christ's indictment, we may observe, 1. His accusation. 2. His examination.

In his accusation we may observe, 1. Who are his accusers. 2. Where he was accused. 3. What was the matter of which they accuse him.

(1.) His accusers were *the chief priests and elders of the people.* The very same that before had judged him guilty of death, are now his accusers before the temporal judge: but why must our Saviour be twice judged? Was not the Sanhedrim, or ecclesiastical court, sufficient to condemn him? I answer, he is twice judged, 1. That his innocency might more appear. 2. Because, said the Jews, *It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.* The Romans had come and restrained the Jews from the execution of their laws.

(2.) The place of the accusation was at the door of the house. *They would not go into the judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the passover.* They are curious of a ceremony, but make no strain to shed innocent blood: they are precise about matters of the law; but mercy, judgment, fidelity, and the love of God, they let them pass.

(3.) The matter of which they accuse him. 1. That he seduced the people. 2. That he forbad to pay tribute to Cæsar. 3. That he said he was a king. How great, but withal how false, were these accusations!

2. For his examination. Pilate was nothing moved with any of the accusations, saving the third; and therefore letting all the rest pass, he asked him only, *Art thou the king of the Jews?* To whom Jesus answered, *My kingdom is not of this world.* By which Pilate knew well that Christ was no enemy to Cæsar. Christ's kingdom is spiritual, his government is in the hearts of men, and what is this to Cæsar?

How many lessons may we learn from hence? 1. Christ was accused; who can be free? The chief priests and elders of the Jews accused Christ. No wonder if those that are chief and great among us accuse poor Christians: there's a perpetual enmity between the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent; an everlasting, irreconcileable, implacable enmity.

(2.) Christ is examined only of his usurpation: *Art thou the king of the Jews?* The men of this world mind only worldly things. Pilate regards not Christ's doctrine; but he is afraid lest he should aspire to the kingdom: and concerning this our Saviour puts him out of doubt, *My kingdom is not of this world.* O eternity! to be for ever in heaven with God and Christ, how shall this swallow up all other thoughts and aims!

2d. *Then Judas which betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself.* There is a repentance that comes too late. In hell men shall repent to all eternity, and such a repentance was this of Judas. About midnight he had received his money in the house of Annas, and now betimes in the morning he repents his bargain, and throws his money back again. The end of this tragedy was, that Judas died a miserable death; he perished by his own hands. *He went and hanged himself.* And *he fell headlong, and burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.*

Who would die such a death for the pleasure of a little sin! The Lord keep our souls from betraying Christ, and from despairing in God's mercy through Christ. Amen, Amen.

Sect. II.—*Of Christ's mission to Herod.*

About seven in the morning, Jesus was sent to Herod, who himself was also at Jerusalem at that time. The reason of this was, because Pilate had heard that Christ was a Galilean; and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, he concludes that Christ must be under his jurisdiction: Herod was glad; *for he was desirous to see Christ of a long season, because he had heard many things of him, and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.* That which I shall observe in this passage is,

1. Herod's questioning of Jesus Christ. 2. Christ's silence to all his questions. 3. Herod's derision; and Christ's dismission back again to Pilate.

1. Herod questioned with him in many words. Herod could not abide to hear his word, but he was well content to see the miracles of Christ.

2. Whatever his questions were, *he answered him nothing.* Herod had been sottishly careless of Jesus Christ; he lived in in the place where Jesus more especially had conversed, yet never had seen his person, or heard his sermons. It gives us to learn thus much, that if we refuse to hear the voice of Christ in the time of mercy, Christ may refuse to speak to us in our time of need.

3. This silence they interpret for simplicity; and so, *Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to*

Pilate. They arrayed him with a white, glittering, gorgeous raiment: the meaning of Herod was not so much to declare his innocence as his folly. In this posture they sent him away again to Pilate; to all their former derisions they added this, that now he was exposed in scorn to the boys of the streets.

Was the uncreated Wisdom of the Father reputed a fool? No wonder if we suffer thousands of reproaches. We are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men; we are fools for Christ's sake. We are made as the filth of the world, and are the off-scouring of all things unto this day. Christians must wear the badge and livery of Jesus Christ: we cannot expect to fare better than our Master. I never knew Christians in better temper than when they are styled by the name of Puritans, hypocrites, formalists, or the like.

Let us not judge of men by their outside garments. Wisdom is often clad in the coat of a fool.

Let us admire at the condescension of Christ, who came down from heaven to teach us wisdom. Wisdom itself was content to be counted a fool, that those who are accounted *the foolish things of the world,* might be wise unto salvation.

Do not we set Christ at nought? Do not we mock him, and array him in a gorgeous robe? Whatsoever we do to one of the least of his saints, he tells us that we do it to himself, *Matt.* xxv. 40, 45. and have we not dealt thus with his saints? Have we not dealt thus with his ministers? When Elisha was going up to Bethel, *there came little children out of the city and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head, Go up, thou bald head.* A reproach of bald head, round head, given to a faithful Elisha, or a minister of Christ, proclaims you as bad as those little children, yea, as bad as Herod, and his men of war. Such Herods were a little before the destruction of Jerusalem. Some there were then *that mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy.*

Sect. III.—*Of Christ and Barabbas compared; and of the Question debated betwixt Pilate and the Jews.*

About eight in the morning Christ is returned to Pilate, who propounded to the Jews, whether they would have Jesus or Barabbas loosed unto them. *Ye have a custom,* said he, *that I should release unto you one at the passover; will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.* It is supposed, that in this passage Pilate endeavoured Christ's liberty; *he knew that for envy they had delivered him,* and he saw that Herod had sent him back uncondemned; and therefore now he propounds this medium to rescue him:

Whom will ye that I release unto you, Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ? In prosecution of this passage, I shall observe, 1. Who this Barabbas was. 2. What is the difference betwixt him and Christ. 3. How they vote. 4. Pilate's query upon the vote. 5. Their answer to his query. 6. His reply unto their answer. 7. Their reduplication upon his reply.

For the first, What was this Barabbas? *One that had made insurrection, and committed murder in the insurrection,* Mark xv. 7. One that was the greatest malefactor of his time; and must he be taken, and Jesus cast!

2. What is the difference betwixt him and Christ. Let us weigh them in the balance, and we may find, 1. Barabbas was a thief, and by violence took away the bread of the needy; but Christ was a feeder and supplier of their needs. 2. Barabbas was a murderer, and had slain the living; but Christ was the Saviour, restoring life unto the dead. 3. Barabbas was a man of blood; but Christ was a meek and quiet spirit. Here's a competition indeed! the author of sedition with the Prince of peace; a murderous mutineer, with a merciful Mediator; a son of Belial, with the Son of God.

3. For their votes, they give them in thus: *Not this man, but Barabbas.* A strange vote, to desire the wolf before the lamb, the noxious and violent before the righteous and innocent.

4. For Pilate's query upon the vote, *What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?* There is more pity in Pilate than in all the Jews. In some things Pilate did justly: as, first, he would not condemn him before his accusations were brought in; nor then neither, before he was convicted of some capital crime: and because he perceives that it was envy that drove on their design, he endeavours to save his life by balancing him with Barabbas; and now he sees that they prefer Barabbas before Jesus, he puts forth the question, *What shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ?* As if he had said, I know not what to do with him; it is against my light to condemn him to death, who is of innocent life.

5. *And they all said unto him, Let him be crucified.* This was the first time that they speak openly their design. It had long lurked within them, that he must die a cursed death, and now their envy breaks out. The cross was a gradual and slow death, it spun out pain into a long thread, and therefore they make choice of it, as they made choice of Jesus; let him die rather than Barabbas, and let him die the death of the cross rather than any speedy death.

6. For Pilate's reply unto this answer, *Why, what evil hath he done?* Sometimes the Jews themselves could say, 'He hath done all things well; he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.' Surely he hath done all things well: he stilled

the winds, and calmed the seas; he raised the dead; he gave grace, and he forgave sins; and by his death he merited for his saints everlasting life: why then should he die, that hath done all things well? No wonder if Pilate object against these malicious ones, *What evil hath he done?*

7. *But they cried out the more, saying, let him be crucified.* Instead of proving some evil against him, they cried out the more; they were instant with loud voices; they made such a clamour, that the earth rang with it. And now is Pilate threatened into another opinion, they require his judgment; and the voices of them, and of the chief-priest, prevailed: so it follows, *And when he saw he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, then Barabbas is released unto them, and Jesus is delivered to be scourged.*

(1.) Give me leave to look amongst ourselves: Is there not some or other amongst us that prefer Barabbas before Jesus? O, yes! those that listen to that old mutinous murderer in his seditious temptations; those that reject the blessed motions of God's own spirit in his tenders and offers of grace; those that embrace the world, with its pleasures and profits, and make them their portion; all these chuse Barabbas, and reject Jesus Christ.

(2.) Give me leave to look on the love and mercy of God in Christ. Our Jesus was not only content to take our nature upon him, but to be compared with the greatest malefactor of those times; and by public sentence to be pronounced more worthy of death than Barabbas. O the love of Christ! He died, that we might live: it was the voice of God, as well as men, Release Barabbas, every believing Barabbas, and crucify Jesus.

Sect. IV.—*Christ whipped, clothed with Purple, and crowned with Thorns.*

About nine (which the Jews call the third hour of the day) was Christ whipped, clothed with purple, and crowned with thorns.

1. When Pilate saw the Jews were set upon his death, he consented. *Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers; and they stripped him.* They pulled off his clothes, and made him stand naked before them all. He that adorns the heaven with stars, and the earth with flowers, is now himself stripped naked.

2. Pilate gave him to be scourged. This some think he did upon no other account, but that the Jews might rest satisfied, and so desist from taking away his life. That Pilate might give him to be scourged on that account, is very probable; because, after the scourging, he brings him out to the Jews, proclaiming, *I find no fault in him.* And before his scourging, he speaks it

more expressly; *He hath done nothing worthy of death, I will therefore chastise him, and release him.*

We may read here a lecture of the immense love of God in Christ to us poor Gentiles. Was there ever love like unto this love? Had he not been God as well as man, he could never have had in his heart such a love as this. It was a divine love; a love far surpassing either the love of men, or women, or angels.

3. They put upon him a purple robe, or a scarlet robe. John calls it purple, and Matthew scarlet. Howsoever some difference may be, yet because of their likeness they are put sometimes one for another. It is in the original, *a scarlet cloak.* It was a loose short garment, at first used only by kings or emperors, and the colour of it was suitable to Christ's condition, for he was now purple all over: his body and his garment were both of a deep-dyed sanguine colour. What is his scarlet garment, but the emblem of his wounded body? that, as he spake of the woman, *she anointed him before-hand unto his burial;* so Pilate, in the mystery, clothes him aforehand unto his bloody death.

4. They platted *a crown of thorns, and put it upon his head.* A goodly crown for the King of kings! We read of many sorts of crowns, as of the triumphal, laurel, naval, mural, but never till this did we read of a crown of thorns. A crown it was to deride him, and a crown of thorns to torment him. In this we may read both his pain and shame. After they had put it upon his head, *they took a reed, and smote him on the head:* that is, they smote him on the head to fasten the crown of thorns upon him surer, and to imprint it deeper.

How many lessons might we draw from hence! They put upon his head a crown of shame, of death, of torture; who came to give us a crown of victory, of life, of glory. O what a shame is it for any of us to crown our heads with rosebuds, to spend our time in vanity, folly, sin, when Christ our Lord had such a grove of thorns growing on his sacred head! The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord: *It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord.* If our Lord and Master was crowned with thorns, surely the members of Christ should not be soft, delicate, effeminate, sensual, or given up to pleasures.

Sect. V.—*Of Christ brought forth, and sentenced.*

About ten, Christ was brought forth, and sentenced. 1. For his bringing forth, I shall therein observe these particulars; as, (1.) We find Pilate bringing forth Jesus out of the common-hall, and shewing this sad spectacle to the people. *Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe; and Pilate saith unto them, Behold, the man!* He thought the very

sight of Christ would have moved them with compassion: they had lashed him almost unto death, they had clothed him with purple, crowned him with thorns; and now they bring him out, and expose him to public view; Pilate crying, *Behold the man!* As if he had said, 'Behold a poor, miserable, distressed man. Behold how he stands disfigured with wounds, behold him weltering in his own blood; and let this sufficient, yea, more than sufficient punishment, suffice to satisfy your rage.'

2. We find the Jews more enraged against Jesus; *When the chief priests and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him! crucify him!* O ye Jews, children of Israel, seed of Abraham, is not this he, concerning whom your fathers cried, *O that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence!* How is it that you should despise him present, whom they desired absent? How is it that your cry and theirs should be so contrary?

3. We find Pilate and the Jews yet debating the business; Pilate is loth to pronounce the sentence, and the chief of the Jews provoke him to it with a threefold argument: as—

(1.) 'They had a law, and by their law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God:' the text tells us, that *Pilate hearing the argument, was the more afraid.* "Pilate," saith Cyril, "was a heathen idolater, and so, worshipping many gods, he could not tell but that Christ might be one of them." This was the meaning of Pilate's question, *Whence art thou?* of what progenitors art thou sprung? *And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him.*

(2.) The Jews came with another argument; they threatened Pilate, *If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend:* a forcible reason, as the case then stood. It was no small matter to be accused of high treason against Cæsar, and therefore under this obligation, Pilate seems to bend: whom the fear of Christ's divinity had restrained, him the fear of Cæsar's frown provoked to go on. And yet before he gives sentence, *he takes water, and washeth his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person, see ye to it.*

(3.) In reference to this, they engaged themselves for him, which was their last argument, *His blood be upon us, and upon our children.* Thus far of the first general.

(4.) For the sentence itself: *When Pilate heard that,—he sat down in the judgment-seat, in a place that is called the Pavement,* (because erected of stones;) *but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.* This word signifies *an high-place,* and *raised above;* it was so, on purpose that the judges might be seen when they pronounced sentence. And here Pilate sitting down, *gave sentence that it should be as they required;* and then, *he delivered Jesus to their will.*

From this sight of Christ, as he was presented by Pilate to

the people, we may learn remorse; not any of us who have crucified Christ by our sins, but we are called on at this time to *behold the man*. Suppose we saw him with our bodily eyes; suppose we had the same view of Christ as the Jews had, when he was thus presented; suppose we saw him in the midst of us, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe, and the reed held in his right hand: suppose we heard the voice of Pilate speaking to us, as he did to the Jews, *Behold the man;* suppose we saw the purple robe lifted up, that we might see all under, how his body was torn; and that same voice from heaven should come to us, saying, 'This same is he whom ye have buffeted, scourged, crowned, crucified with your sins.' Were not this enough to prick us in our hearts, and to make us cry, *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* We look on Pilate, on the soldiers, on the Jews; but we look not on our sins, saying, Could we but realize our sins as the principal of these sufferings of Christ, methinks our hearts should break. Consider, yesterday so many lies were told, and so many oaths were sworn; little did we think, that all this while we had been stripping Christ naked, whipping Christ with rods, clothing Christ with a purple-scarlet robe, platting a crown of thorns, and putting it on his head, sceptering him with a reed, and saluting him with scorn, *Hail, King of the Jews!* Men, brethren, and fathers, be not deceived, Christ is mocked, scorned, and thus abused by you when you sin; your sins thus dealt with Christ, and in God's acceptation your sins thus deal with Christ even unto this day. Never say, it was long since Christ was crucified, and he is now in heaven, for by your sins you crucify again the Lord of glory, you put him again to open shame. O look on him whom you have pierced! Pilate thought that if the Jews would but behold the man, their hearts would have mollified; and shall not I think as well of you? It is a blessed means to make sin bitter, and to breed in our hearts remorse for sin, if we will but hearken to this voice of Pilate, *Behold the man.*

Sect. VI.—*Of Christ Crucifying.*

About eleven, they prepare with all speed for the execution. In this hour we may observe these several passages. 1. Their taking off the robe, and clothing him again with his own raiment. 2. Their leading him away from Gabbatha to Golgotha; bearing the cross, with Simon's help. 3. His comforting the women who followed weeping. 4. Their giving him vinegar to drink, mingled with gall. 5. Their crucifying, or fastening him on the cross.

1. The evangelist tells us, *They took the robe off from him, and they put his own raiment on him.* Origen observes, "They took off his robes, but they took not off his crown of thorns." It

is supposed this small business could not be done without great pain; after his sore whipping, his blood congealed, and by that means stuck to his scarlet mantle; so that in pulling off the robe, and putting on his raiment, there could not be but a renewing of his wounds.

2. *They led him away, bearing his cross.* They had scarce left him so much blood or strength, as to carry himself, and must he now bear his heavy cross! Yes, till he faint and sink, so long he must bear it, and longer too, did they not fear that he should die with less shame and smart than they intended him; which to prevent, *they constrained one Simon, a Cyrenian, to bear his cross after him.* The cross was a Roman death, and so one of their abominations; hence they themselves would not touch the tree of infamy, lest they should have been defiled; but to touch the Lord's anointed, to crucify the Lord of glory, they make no scruple at all.

3. He comforted the women who followed weeping. *And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him; but Jesus turning to them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.* In the midst of his misery, he forgets not mercy; in the midst of all their tortures and scorn, he can hear his following friends weeping behind him, and neglect all his own sufferings to comfort them. He hath more compassion on the women that follow him weeping, than of his own mangled self, fainting and bleeding unto death: he feels more the tears that drop from their eyes, than all the blood that flows from his own veins. We heard before, that he would not vouchsafe a word to Pilate that threatened him, nor to Herod that entreated him; and yet, unasked, how graciously doth he turn about his bleeding face to these weeping women, affording them looks and words too, both of compassion and of consolation, *Daughters of Jerusalem weep not for me, but for yourselves.*— And yet observe, he did not turn his face to them, until he heard them weep; nor may we think to see his face in glory, unless we first bathe our eyes in sorrow. It is a wonder to me that any in our age should ever decry tears, remorse, contrition, compunction. How many saints do we find, both in the Old and New Testament, confuting by their practices those gross opinions. The promise tells us, *They that sow in tears shall reap in joy;* he that follows Christ, or *goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*

But what's the meaning of this, *Weep not for me?* May we not weep for the death of Christ? Do we not find in scripture that all the people wept at the death of Moses? that all the church wept at the death of Stephen? that the women lamented the death of Dorcas? And, did not Christ himself weep for

Lazarus, and Jerusalem? Nay, is he not here weeping showers of blood, all along the way? O, what's the meaning of this, *Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves?*

I answer, the words are not absolute, but comparative. Christ doth not simply forbid us to weep for our friends, but rather to turn our worldly grief into godly sorrow for sin.

Christ pointed the women to the true cause of all their sorrow, which was their sins; and thus we have cause to weep indeed. Our sins were the cause of the sufferings of Christ; and in that respect, O that our heads were fountains, and our eyes rivers of tears! O that the Lord would strike these rocky hearts of ours with the rod of true remorse, that water might gush out! O that we could thus mourn over Jesus, whom we have pierced and *be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.*

4. No sooner was he come to the place of execution, *but they gave him vinegar to drink, mingled with gall*: this was a custom amongst Jews and Romans, that to the condemned they ever gave wine to drink. But in that they gave him vinegar mingled with gall, it was an argument of their cruelty and envy.

5. They crucified him, that is, they fastened him to the cross; and then lift him up. That I mean to observe of this crucifying of Christ, I shall reduce to these two heads, *viz.* the shame and pain.

(1.) For the shame, it was a cursed death; *Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.* When it was in use, it was chiefly inflicted upon slaves, that either falsely accused, or treacherously conspired their master's death; but on whomsoever it was inflicted, this death, in all ages among the Jews, hath been branded with a special kind of ignominy; and so the apostle signifies when he saith, *He abased himself to the death, even to the death of the cross.*

(2.) For the pain, it was a painful death; as appears several ways. 1. His legs and hands were violently racked, and pulled out to the places fitted for his fastening, and then pierced through with nails. 2. By this means he wanted the use both of his hands and feet, and so was forced to hang immoveably upon the cross, as being unable to turn any way for his ease. 3. The longer he lived, the more he endured; for by the weight of his body, his wounds were opened and enlarged, his nerves and veins were rent and torn asunder, and his blood gushed out more and more. 4. He died by inch-meal, as I may say, and not at once: the cross kept him a great while upon the rack. It was full three hours betwixt Christ's affixion and expiration; and it would have been longer, if he had not freely and willingly given up the ghost: it is reported that Andrew the apostle was two whole days upon the cross before he died; and so long might

Christ have been, if God had not heightened it to greater degrees of torment.

I may add to this, as above all this, the pains of his soul while he hanged on the cross; for there also Christ had his agonies and conflicts, these were those ὠδῖνες θανάτου, those pains, or *pains of death*, from which Peter tells us Christ was loosed. The word ὠδῖνες, properly signifies the pain of a woman in travail; such were the pains of Jesus Christ in death: the prophet calls it *the travail of his soul;* and the psalmist calls it *the pains of hell: The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me.* The sorrows or cords of death compassed his body, and the pains of hell gat hold upon his soul: and these were they that extorted from him that passionate expostulation, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* He complains of that which was more grievous to him than ten thousand deaths. 'My God, my God, why hast thou withdrawn thy wonted presence, and left my soul (as it were) in hell?'

And now we reflect on the shame and pain: O the curse and bitterness that our sins have brought on Jesus Christ! When I but think on these bleeding veins, scourged sides, furrowed back, harrowed temples, digged hands and feet, and then consider that my sins were the cause of all; methinks I should need no more arguments for self-abhorring. Christians, would not your hearts rise against him that should kill your father, mother, brother, wife, husband? O then, how should your hearts and souls rise against sin! Surely your sin it was that murdered Christ, that killed him who is instead of all relations, who is a thousand times dearer to you than father, mother, husband, child. One thought of this should, methinks, be enough to make you say, as Job did, *I abhor myself in dust and ashes.* O, what's that cross on the back of Christ? My sins. O, what's that crown on the head of Christ? My sins. O, what's that nail in the right-hand, and that other in the left-hand, of Christ? My sins. O, what's that spear in the side of Christ? My sins. O, what are those nails and wounds in the feet of Christ? My sins. With a spiritual eye I see no other engine tormenting Christ; no other Pilate, Herod, Annas, Caiaphas, condemning Christ; no other soldiers, officers, Jews, or Gentiles, doing execution on Christ,—but only sin. O my sins, my sins!

Comfort we ourselves in the end of this death of Christ: *As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.* Without this consideration, the contemplation of Christ's death would be altogether unprofitable. Now what was the end? Surely this, Christ lifted up that he might draw all men unto him: Christ hanged on a tree, that he might bear our sins on the tree. This was the plot which God aimed at in the crucifying of Christ; and thus our faith must

take it up: indeed our faith hangs on this. The design of Christ in his sufferings is that welcome news, (O remember this,) Christ is crucified! And why so? *That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

Sect. VII.—*Of the Consequents after Christ's Crucifying.*

1. About twelve, when the sun is usually brightest, it began now to darken. This darkness was so great, that it spread over all the land of Jewry: some think, over all the world; so we translate it in Luke, *And there was darkness over all the earth:* and many Gentiles, besides Jews, observed the same as a great miracle.

The cause of this darkness is diversely rendered by several authors. Some think that the sun, by divine power, withdrew, and held back its beams. Whatsoever was the cause, it continued for the space of three hours as dark as the darkest winter's night.

2. About three, which the Jews call the ninth hour, the sun now beginning to receive his light, *Jesus cried with a loud voice, Eli, Eli, lama sabacthani? My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?—And then, that the scripture might be fulfilled, he said, I thirst.—And when he had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished.—And, at last, crying with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.* I cannot stay on these seven words of Christ which he uttered on the cross: his words were ever gracious, but never more gracious than at this time. We cannot find, in all the books of men, in all the records of time, either such sufferings or such sayings, as were these last sayings and sufferings of Jesus Christ.

3. About four in the afternoon he was pierced with a spear, and there issued out of his side both blood and water. *And one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water.* This was a fountain of both sacraments, the fountain of all our happiness, *the fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.* There are three that bear witness on earth, saith John, *the Spirit, the water, and the blood.* Out of the side of Christ, being now dead, there issues water and blood; signifying that he is both our justification and sanctification.

4. About five (which the Jews call the eleventh, and the last hour of the day) Christ was taken down, and buried by Joseph and Nicodemus.

Thus far we have propounded the blessed object of Christ's suffering and dying for us. Our next work is to direct you how to *look unto him* in this respect.

CHAP. III.

Sect. I.—*Of Knowing Jesus as carrying on the great work of our Salvation in his death.*

1. Let us know Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation during his sufferings and death. This is the high point which Paul was ever studying: preaching, *I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.* Christ crucified, is the rarest piece of knowledge in the world. The person of Christ is a matter of high speculation; but Christ farther considered, as clothed with his garments of blood, is that knowledge which especially Paul pursues: he esteems not, determines not, to make any profession of any other science or doctrine. O my soul, how many days, and months, and years, hast thou spent to attain some little measure of knowledge in the arts, and tongues, and sciences? And yet what a poor skill hast thou attained in respect of the many thousands of them that knew nothing at all of Jesus Christ! And what if thou hadst reached a greater proficiency? Couldst thou have dived into the secrets of nature? Couldst thou have excelled "the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt, and the wisdom of Solomon, who spake of beasts, of fowls, of fishes, of all trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall," yet without the saving knowledge of Christ crucified, (Christ suffering, bleeding, and dying,) all this had been nothing, see *Eccl.* i. 18. and above all, that is the rarest which shews him suffering for us, and so freeing us from hell-sufferings. Come then, and spend thy time for the future more fruitfully in reading, learning, knowing, this one necessary thing. Study it therefore, but be sure thy study and knowledge be rather practical than speculative. Do not merely learn the history of Christ's death, but the efficacy, virtue, and merit of it. Know what thou knowest in reference to thyself, as if Jesus had been all the while carrying on the business of thy soul's salvation; as if thou hadst stood by, and Christ had spoke to thee, as to the woman, 'Weep not for me, but for thyself; thy sins caused my sufferings, and my sufferings were for the abolition of thy sins.'

Sect. II.—*Of Considering Jesus in that respect.*

Let us consider Jesus carrying on this great work of our salvation during his sufferings and death. *They shall look upon me whom they have pierced,* saith the prophet; that is, they shall consider me: and accordingly the apostle was looking unto Jesus, or considering Jesus, *the author and finisher of our faith, who*

for the joy set before him, endured the cross, and despised the shame. It is good in all respects, and under all considerations, to look unto Jesus from first to last; but, above all, this text relates to the time of his sufferings: and hence it is that Luke calls Christ's passion θεωρίαν, a theory or sight: *And all the people that came together to that sight, smote their breasts and returned.* Not but that every passage of Christ is a sight, worthy our looking on, or considering; Christ in his Father's purpose, Christ in the promise, Christ in performance, Christ in his birth, and Christ in his life. O what blessed objects are these to look upon! But, above all, *Consider him,* saith the apostle, *that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself.—Consider him, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, and despised the shame.* Of all other parts, acts, or passages of Christ, the Holy Ghost hath only honoured Christ's passion (his sufferings and death) with this name, *theory,* and *sight.* O then let us look on this, consider this.

1. Consider him passing over the brook Cedron. It signifies the wrath of God, and rage of men. Through many tribulations must they go, that will follow after him to the kingdom of glory. Consider him entering into the garden of Gethsemane: in a garden Adam sinned, and in this garden Christ must suffer. Into this garden no sooner was he entered, but he began to be agonized: all his powers within him were in conflict. Consider, O my soul, how suddenly he is struck into a strange fear. Never was man so afraid of the torments of hell, as Christ, standing in our room, is of his Father's wrath; nor was he only afraid, but very heavy. *My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.* His sorrow was deadly, it melted his soul as wax is melted with heat; it continued with him till his last gasp; his heart was like wax burning all the time of his passion: nor was he only afraid and heavy, but he began to be sore amazed. This signifies an universal cessation of all the faculties of the soul from their several functions. We usually call it a consternation. It is like a clock stopped for the while from going, by some hand or other laid upon it; such a motion of the mind as whereby for the present he was disabled to mind any thing else, but the dreadful sense of the wrath of God. O what an agony was this! what a struggling passion of mixed grief! 'O, my Father! Sinner, thou hast bent thy bow, lo here an open breast! fix herein all thy shafts; better I suffer for a while, than that all men should be damned for ever: thy will is mine: lo, I will bear the burden of sin: shoot here thy arrows of revenge!' And thus, as he prayed, he sweat, *and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.* O what man or angel can conceive the agony, the fear, the sorrow, the amazement of heart, that, without all outward violence, bled through the flesh and skin; not some faint dew, but solid drops of blood!

O my soul, consider this; and if thou wilt bring this consideration home, say, thy sins were the cause of this bloody sweat.

2. Consider his apprehension. Judas is now at hand, with a troop following him. See how, without all shame he set himself in the van, and, coming to his Lord and Master, gives him a most traitorous kiss: *What, Judas, betrayest thou the son of man with a kiss?* Hast thou sold the Lord of life to such cruel merchants as covet greedily his blood? At what price hast thou set the Lord of all the creatures? At thirty pence? What a slender price for the Lord of glory. At that time said Christ, *Ye be come as against a thief, with swords and staves; I sat daily among you teaching in the temple, and ye never laid hands on me; but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.*

Now the prince of darkness exercised his power; now the ravenous wolves assaulted the most innocent lamb in the world: now they furiously haled him this way and that way. What cries, and shouts, and clamours made they over him! Now they lay hold on his holy hands, and bind them hard with rough and knotty cords. Now they bring him back again over Cedron. Now they lead him openly through the streets of Jerusalem, and carry him to the house of Annas in triumph. O, my soul, consider these several passages leisurely, and with good attention, till thou feelest some motions in thy affection. He that is fairer than all the children of men, is besmeared with weeping, and troubled with sorrow of heart. Surely there is something, O my soul, in thee that caused all this: hadst not thou sinned, the Sun of righteousness had never been eclipsed.

3. Consider the hurrying of Jesus from Annas to Caiaphas. There a council is called, and Caiaphas the high-priest adjures our Lord to tell him, if he was Christ the Son of God? No sooner he affirms it, but he is doomed guilty of blasphemy. Now again they disgorge all their malice and revenge; each one gives him buffets and strokes: they spit upon that divine face, they hoodwink his eyes, and strike him on the cheek, scoffing, and jesting, and saying, *Who is it that smote thee?* O my soul, why dost thou not humble thyself at this so wonderful example? How is it that there should remain in the world any token of pride after this so marvellous example of humility! I am astonished this so great patience overcomes not my anger, this so great abasing assuageth not my pride, these so violent buffets beat not down my presumption: Jesus Christ by these means should overthrow the kingdom of pride, and yet that there should remain in me the relics of pride! Consider all those night-sufferings of Christ; now was the season that all creatures should take their rest. All the night long Christ is tormented by thy sins. Not one jot of rest hath Christ, whom thou by the alarm of thy sins disquieted, both at evening, at midnight, and at the cock-crow, and at the dawning.

4. Consider the hurryings of Christ from Caiaphas to Pilate. Now he stands before Pilate, where he was accused of sedition and usurpation. Not only Jews, but Gentiles, have their hands imbrued in the blood of Christ: Pilate was delegated from Cæsar, yet not without a prophecy: *Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished; for he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles.* At the Gentile tribunal, being questioned of his kingdom, he answers both the Jews and Gentiles, that they need not fear his usurpation: *My kingdom is not of this world.* He gives kingdoms that are eternal; but he will take away none that are temporal. Christ came not into the world to be Cæsar's, or Pilate's, or Herod's successor; but, if they had believed, to have been their Saviour. O that I could but contemn the world as Christ did! O that I could seek the kingdom of God, and his righteousness. O my soul, I feel it, unless I can be free from the affection of all creatures, I cannot with freedom of mind aspire unto divine things; unless I be willing with Christ to be despised and forsaken of all, I can have no inward peace, nor be spiritually enlightened, nor be wholly united unto the Lord Jesus Christ.

5. Consider the hurryings of Jesus from Pilate to Herod. There is he questioned of many things, but justly is the Lamb of God dumb, and opened not his mouth; upon this he is mocked, and arrayed in a gorgeous robe. Wisdom is taken for folly, and the justifier of sinners for a sinner. See how he emptied himself, and made himself of no reputation, that he might fill thee with goodness, and make thee wise unto salvation.

6. Consider the hurryings of Jesus from Herod back again to Pilate. O my Saviour, how art thou now abused! New accusations are forged; and when Pilate sees that nothing will do, but Christ must die, he delivers him to be stripped, whipped, clothed in purple, crowned with thorns, and sceptered with a reed. Who can number the stripes wherewith they tore his body, one wound eating into another! O my heart, how can I think of this without tears of blood! O joy of angels, and glory of saints, who hath thus defiled thee with so many bloody blows? Certainly they were not thy sins, but mine. Love was the cause why thou didst bestow upon me all thy benefits, and mercy moved thee to take upon thee all my miseries.

7. Consider that sad spectacle of Jesus, when he came forth wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe, and Pilate saying unto them, *Behold the man!* O my soul, fix thy eyes on the sad object! Suppose thyself in the case of Jesus; what if in so sensible and tender a part as thy head is, men should fasten a number of thorns! Alas! thou canst hardly abide the prick of a pin, much less the piercing of so many thorns: O, but thy Jesus was crowned with thorns, and sceptered with a reed, and that reed was taken out of his hands to beat the crown of thorns

into his head; thy Jesus was whipped with cords and rods; and being in this plight, thou art called to behold the man! Canst thou consider him at present, as if thou hadst a view of this very man? Methinks it should make thee break out, and say, 'O the brightness of thy Father's glory, who hath thus cruelly dealt with thee? O unspotted glass of the majesty of God, who hath thus wholly disfigured thee? O river that flows out of the paradise of delights, who hath thus troubled thee? It is my sins, O Lord, that have so troubled thee: my sins were the thorns that pricked thee, the lashes that whipped thee, the purple that clothed thee: it is I, Lord, that am thy tormentor, and the very cause of these thy pains.'

8. Consider Pilate's sentence, that Jesus should be crucified as the Jews required. Now they had him in their will, and they did to him what seemed them good. Follow him from Gabbatha to Golgotha. See how they lay the heavy cross upon his tender shoulders, that were so rent and torn with whips. Accompany him all the way to the execution, and help to carry his cross to mount Calvary; and there see him lifted up on that engine of torture, the bloody cross: he hangs on nails, and as he hangs, his own weight becomes his affliction. O see how his arms and legs were racked with violent pulls, his hands and feet bored with nails, his whole body torn with stripes, and gored with blood. And now, O my soul, run with all thy might into his arms, held out at their full length to receive thee. O weigh the matter! Because sin entered by the senses, therefore the head, in which the senses flourished, is crowned with searching thorns: because the hands and feet are more especially the instruments of sin, therefore his hands and feet are nailed to the cross for satisfaction. Be enlarged, O my thoughts, and consider it, and consider it again.

9. Consider the darkness that spread over all the earth. Now was the sun ashamed to shew his brightness, considering that the Father of lights was darkened with such disgrace: the heavens discoloured their beauty, and are in mourning robes: the lamp of heaven is immantled with a miraculous eclipse. The sun in the firmament will sympathize with the Sun of righteousness. It will not appear in glory, though it be mid-day, because the Lord of glory is thus disgraced. And now hear the voice that comes from the Son of God, *My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Christ, in the garden, tasted the bitter cup of God's fierce wrath, but now he drunk the dregs of it. O but what's the meaning of this; *My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Surely, 1. This was not a perpetual, but a temporary forsaking. The godhead was not took away from the manhood, but the union remained still, even now when the manhood was forsaken. 2. This was not a forsaking on Christ's part, but only on the Father's part; the Father forsook Christ, but Christ went after him.

God took away the sense of his love; but the Son of God laid hold upon him, crying, *My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?* 3. This forsaking was not in respect of his being, but in respect of the feeling of God's favour, love, and mercy. Certainly God loved him still; but his sense of comfort was now quite gone, so as it never was before. In his agony there was now and then some little flash of lightning to cheer him; but now all the sense and feeling of God's love was gone. Christ now took the place of sinners, and God the Father shut him out, as it were, amongst the sinners: he drew his mercy out of sight, and therefore he cried out in a kind of wonder, *My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?* After this he speaks but a few words more, and gives up the ghost. He dies, that we might live; he is dissolved himself, that we might be united to his Father. O my soul, see him now, if thou canst for weeping; his eyes are dim, his cheeks are wan, his face is pale, his head is bowing, his heart is panting, himself is dying. Come, and die with him by mortification. Look pale, like him, with grief and sorrow, and trouble for thy sins.

10. Consider the piercing of his side with a spear, whence came out a stream of blood and water. O fountain of everlasting waters! Methinks I see the blood running out of his side more freshly than those streams which ran out of the garden of Eden, and watered the whole world. Consider the taking of his body down by Joseph, the burying of it by Joseph and Nicodemus. O my spirit, go with me a little! Christ being dead, it is pity but he should have a funeral. According to the letter, let Joseph and Nicodemus bear his corpse; let the blessed Virgin go after it sighing and weeping, and at every other place looking up to heaven; let Mary Magdalen follow after with precious ointment, and with her hair hanging, ready, if need were, to wipe his feet again. Now, let every sinner, according to the nature of his sin, draw something from the passion of Christ to the mortifying of his sin; yea, let all turn mourners; let all bow their heads, and be ready to give up the ghost for the name of Christ. O my soul, that thou wouldst thus meditate, and thus imitate, that so thy meditation might be fruitful, and thy imitation real; I mean, that thy life and death might be conformable to the life and death of Jesus Christ.

Sect. III.—*Of Desiring Jesus in that respect.*

Let us desire Jesus, carrying on the great work of our salvation in his death. Indeed nothing doth so cool and refresh a parched and thirsty soul, as the blood of Jesus; which made the poor woman cry out so earnestly, "I have an husband, and children, and many other comforts, but I would give them all, and all the good that ever I shall see in this world, or in the

world to come, to have my poor thirsty soul refreshed with that precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But what is there in Christ's blood or death that is so desirable? I answer,

1. There is in it the person of Christ, he that is God-man, *the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person.* It is he that died; every drop of his blood was not only the blood of an innocent man, but of one that was God as well as man. God with his own blood purchased the church. Now surely every thing of God is desirable.

2. There is in it a worth. Christ considered under the notion of a sacrifice, is of infinite worth. No wealth in heaven or earth besides this, could redeem one soul; and therefore the apostle sets this against all corruptible things, as silver and gold, the things so much set by amongst the men of this world: *Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold,—but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot.*

3. There is in it a merit and satisfaction. The scripture doth not expressly use these words, but it hath the sense and meaning of them; as in that text, *He hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood.* The very words, *redeeming* and *buying*, plainly demonstrate, that a satisfaction was given to God by the death of Jesus; *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us.—Ye are bought with a price.* And what price was that? Why, his own blood; *Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood;* that is, by thy death and passion. This was the λύτρον, that ransom which Christ gave: *The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many;* or, as the apostle, *He gave himself a ransom for all:* the word is here ἀντίλυτρον, which signifies an adequate price, or a counter-price; as when one doth or undergoeth some thing in the room of another; as when one yields himself a captive for the redeeming of another out of captivity, or gives up his own life for the saving of another man's life; so Christ gave himself ἀντίλυτρον, a ransom, or counter-price, submitting himself to the like punishment, that his redeemed ones should have undergone.

4. There is in it not only a true, but a copious and full satisfaction. Christ's death and blood is superabundant to our sins: *The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant,* 1 Tim. i. 14. ὑπερεπλεόνασε, it was over full, redundant, more than enough. Many an humble soul is apt to complain, 'O if I had not been so great a sinner, there might have been hope.' This is to undervalue Christ's redemption, this is to think there is more in sin to damn, than in Christ's sufferings to save: whereas all thy sins to Christ, are but as a little cloud to the glorious sun; yea, all the sins of all the men in the world, are but, to Christ's merits, as a drop to the ocean.

5. There is in it remission of sins, so saith Christ: *This is my blood of the new Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.* Remission of sins is attributed to Christ's death as a cause; it is not thy tears or prayers, or rending of heart, that could pay the least farthing: *Without shedding of blood,* saith the apostle, *there is no remission.* God will have tears, and blood also, though not for the same purpose; for all thy tears, thou must fly to Christ only as the cause: it is true thou must mourn, and pray, and humble thyself, but it is Christ's blood only that can wash us clean. O remember this! God will not pardon without satisfaction by the blood of Christ. And surely this makes Christ's death so desirable: 'O, my sins afflict me,' cries many a one; 'O I am loathsome in my own eyes, much more in God's; surely God is offended with my dulness, slothfulness, and my thousand imperfections; I am all the day long entangled with sin.' But let this contrite spirit look on Christ's death, and therein he may find all sin is pardoned. See here what an argument is put into thy mouth, from these sufferings of Christ; well mayest thou say, 'O Lord, I am unworthy, but it is just and right that Christ obtain what he died for; O pardon my sins for his death's sake, and for his precious blood's sake.

6. There is in it reconciliation and peace with God. *In Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ, for he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us.—When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.*—This certainly should support the drooping soul; it may be thou criest, 'My sins have made a breach betwixt God and my soul; I have warred against heaven, and now God wars against me; and O what odds! if the Lord be angry, yea, but a little, what will become of my poor soul? Is stubble able to contend with the consuming fire? How then shall I contend with God?' But come and look on Christ's death, as the means and meritorious cause of reconciliation; and thou canst not but say, 'O, this death is desirable!' When God the Father looks at a sinner in the bloody glass of Christ, then saith God, 'Fury is not in me, I have no more controversy with this soul: seeing Christ hath suffered, it is enough, I have as much as my justice can demand, my frowns are now turned into smiles.' Why, this is it that makes Christ's death and blood so desirable to the soul; what shall Jacob so rejoice in seeing Esau's face altered to him? shall he say to Esau, *I have seen thy face, as the face of God?* How much rather may the humble and believing sinner be filled with gladness, when God, through Christ's blood, shall be thus appeased and reconciled with him!

There is in it a blessed virtue to open heaven, and to make passage thither for our souls, liberty *to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.* It is the blood of Christ that rends the veil,

and makes a way into the holy of holies, that is, into the kingdom of heaven. Without this blood, there is no access to God. It is only by the blood of Christ, that heaven is open to our prayers, and that heaven is open to our persons: this blood is that key that unlocks heaven, and lets in the souls of his redeemed ones. *And I looked,* saith John, *and behold a door was open in heaven, and the first voice I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me, which said, Come up hither;* and no sooner was he in the spirit, and entered in, but he heard the new song: *Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.*

Come now, and gather in all these particulars; there is in Christ's blood, the person of Christ, the price of souls, a merit and satisfaction, a copious and full satisfaction, remission of sins, reconciliation with God, a passage into glory; I might add all other privileges, benefits, dignities of the soul, for they all flow from the blood of Jesus, and they are all contained, either expressly or virtually, in the blood of Jesus; and is not all this worth the looking after? O my soul, where is thy languor and fainting towards this blessed object? When David desired strongly God's law, he expressed his longings, by the breaking and fainting of his soul: *My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath to thy judgments at all times;—and my soul fainteth for thy salvation.* O where be these breakings and faintings? Strength of desire, is expressed by the apostle, by groaning, which is the language of sickness. O where be these groanings after Christ's death? When I call to mind that Christ's death is my ransom, that Christ's stripes are my cures, that Christ's blood is my fountain to wash in, and to be clean; how should I but pray in this sense, *His blood be upon us, and on our children!* O, I am undone, except I have a share in this blood! It is only this fountain, that can quench my thirst; and now I have seen the fountain opened, how should I but thirst, and cry out with the woman of Samaria, *O give me this water, that I may thirst no more!* But alas, I say it, I only say it. O that I could feel it! O my Jesus, that thou wouldst breed in me ardent desires, vehement longings, unutterable groans, mighty gaspings. When my spirit is in right frame, I feel some desires after Christ's blood; but how short are these desires, how unworthy of the things desired! Come, Lord, kindle in me hot, burning desires, and then give me the desirable object.

Sect. IV.—*Of Hoping in Jesus in that respect.*

Let us hope in Jesus, carrying on the great work of our salvation, in his sufferings and death. By this hope, I intend only that which the apostle calls *full assurance of hope.* It is

not every hope that is a well-grounded hope; that we may discern that the grounds of our hope in Christ's death are not false, I shall lay down these signs:—

1. If Christ's death be mine, then is that great end of his death accomplished in me; viz. *By the sacrifice of himself he hath put away sin*, even my sin;—and, *in him I have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.* As on this account he suffered, *to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity;* so if his death be mine, I may assuredly say, *My sins are pardoned, and mine iniquities are done away.* Come then, and try by this sign, canst thou assure thyself that thy sins are forgiven thee? hast thou heard the whisper of God's spirit, 'Son, or daughter, be of good comfort, thy sins are remitted?' there is no question then, but thou art redeemed by his blood, thou hast part in his sufferings.

2. If Christ's death be mine, then am I made conformable to Christ in his death. The same that was done to Christ in a natural way, is done in the believer in a spiritual way; that is, as Christ died, so the believer dies; as Christ died for sin, so the believer dies to sin: *In that he died, he died unto sin,—Likewise reckon ye yourselves dead unto sin.* Observe here the analogy and resemblance betwixt Christ and us; both die unto sin; Christ by way of expiation, for the sins of others; we by the way of mortification, and crucifying our sins. I look upon this sign as the very touchstone of a Christian.

Two questions I suppose needful, to resolve the grounds of our hope concerning our interest in the death of Christ.

1. Whether in truth our sins are mortified?

2. Whether we grow in mortification?

For the first: whether in truth our sins are mortified, it is a skill worth our learning, because of the many deceits that are within us; sin may seem to be mortified when the occasion is removed; or, when it is not violent, but quiet; when it is but removed from one sin unto another; or, when the sap and strength of sin is dead: as the lamp goes out, when either the oil is not supplied, or taken away. Now that in this scrutiny we may search to the bottom, and know the truth of our mortification, it will appear by these rules:

1. True mortification springs from a root of faith. If we can make out, that we believe in Christ for life and salvation, and that now we feel in us the decay of sin, we may conclude from the cause, that this decay of sin is true mortification: it is a blessed effect arising from a right cause.

2. True mortification is general; not only one sin, but all sins are mortified in a true believer. As death is unto the members of the body, so is mortification unto the members of sin; now death seizeth upon every member, it leaves not life in any one

member of the body; so neither doth mortification leave life in any one member of sin. It is good to observe the degrees of mortification: The first is, to forbear the practice of gross sins, in word and deed. The second is, to deny consent and will to all frailties and infirmities. The third is, to be free from any liking of any evil motion; not only to deny consent, but also to deny the very thought or imagination. If when these motions first arise, we presently quench, reject, detest, and cast them away from us; therein is true mortification.

2d. Whether we grow in our mortification? True mortification is that which grows. Now the growth of our mortification will appear by these following signs:—

1. Growing mortification hath its chief conflicts in spiritual lusts. At first we mortify grosser evils; but when we grow in this blessed duty, we then set ourselves against spiritual wickedness; as pride, presumption, self-confidence. This method the apostle sets down; *Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit.* First, from all filthiness of the flesh or body, and then from all filthiness of the spirit.

2. Growing mortification is constant, lasting, durable. When there is in the heart a sudden flowing and reflowing, it comes from those vast seas of corruption that are within us: in this case, mortification is very weak. But on the contrary, if we find our standing more firm and sure, if for the main we walk evenly, and keep closely to the Lord; it carries with it an evidence that our mortification grows.

3. Growing mortification feels lust more weak, and the spirit more strong in its ordinary actings. Suppose it be a lust or fancy, it cannot boil up to gross fancies as it was wont; or, suppose it be pride, it boils not up to such a spirit of pride as formerly; instead of bringing forth fruit, it now brings forth blossoms; or, instead of bringing forth blossoms, it now brings forth nothing but leaves: this is a sign that this lust is withering more and more; when the waters abate, and overflow less ground, we may conclude, that mortification grows.

4. Growing mortification hath more ability to abstain from the very occasions and beginnings of lust. When a man cannot endure to come where such a one is that he loves not, when he cannot endure the sight of him, or any thing that puts him in mind of him, not so much as to parley or speak with him; this is a sign of strong hatred: and so when a man hates the very garment spotted with the flesh, here's a good sign.

O my soul, try now the growth of thy mortification by these signs: hast thou overcome grosser sins, and is now thy chief conflict with spiritual wickednesses? Is thy standing and walking with God more close, and even, and constant, than sometimes it hath been? Is thy lust more weak, and thy grace more strong,

in ordinary actings? Hast thou now more ability to quench the flame of sin in the very spark, to abstain from sin in its first motion? Why, then is the promise accomplished, *He will subdue our iniquities:* surely thou art a growing Christian; thou hast fellowship with Christ in his sufferings; thy ground is solid, firm, and stable; thy hope hath foundation, and thou mayest build upon it, that Christ's death and sufferings are thine, even thine.

Sect. V.--*Of Believing in Jesus in that respect.*

Let us believe in Jesus, carrying on the great work of our salvation during his sufferings and death. Every one looks upon this as an easy duty; only the humble soul cries out, 'O what a hard thing is it, considering my enmity against Christ, to believe that Christ died for me, that he gave himself to the death, even to the death of the cross, for my soul!'

Trembling soul! throw not away thyself by unbelief. It may be thou wouldst not die for an enemy, an irreconcileable enemy; but are not the mercies of God above all the mercies of men? Look on Jesus as lifted up, and then look at the end and meaning; why was Jesus thus lifted up?

1. One design of Christ's death, was to redeem us from the slavery of death and hell. We were carnal, *sold under sin;* whereupon the law seized on us, locked us up, as it were, in a dungeon; yea, the sentence passed, and we but waited for execution. Now, to get us rid from this dismal, damnable estate, Christ himself is made under the law, that he might redeem us: not by way of entreaty; that would not serve the turn. Sold we were, and bought we must be, it was a matter of redemption: but with what must we be redeemed? *Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.* His precious blood was the price we stood him in; which he paid when he gave his life a ransom for many. The case stood thus betwixt Christ and us in this point of redemption; we all, like a company of malefactors, were ready to be executed. Now, what said Christ to this? 'I will suffer that which they should suffer; I will take upon me their execution, upon condition I may redeem them.' Now this he did at his death, and this was the end why he died, that by his death we might be redeemed from death and hell.

2. Another design of Christ's death, was to mortify our members which are upon the earth. Not only would he remit sin, but he would destroy it, kill it, crucify it; he would not have it *reign in our mortal bodies, that we should obey it in the lusts thereof.* This design the apostle sets out in these words, *He bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead unto sin, should live unto righteousness.* Christ, by his death, had

not only a design to deliver us from the guilt of sin, but also from the power of sin. *God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.* Paul was a mortified man, dead to the world, and dead to sin. But how came he so to be? Why, this he attributes to the cross, the death of Christ. The death of Jesus was the cause of this death in Paul: *How much more shall the blood of Christ—purge our consciences from dead works, to serve the living God?* There is in the death of Christ, first, a value, and, secondly, a virtue; the former is available to our justification, the latter to our sanctification. Now sanctification hath two parts, mortification and vivification: Christ's death, or passive obedience, is more properly conducible to the one; his life, or active obedience, to the other.

O my soul, look to this: herein lies the pith and marrow of the death of Christ; and now if thou wilt but exercise thy faith in this respect, how mightest thou draw the virtue of his death into thy soul? But here's a question, How should I manage my faith, to draw down the virtue of Christ's death, and so to feel the virtue of Christ's death in my soul, mortifying, crucifying, and killing sin?

I answer, 1. In prayer, meditation, self-examination, and receiving of the Lord's supper. I must propound to myself the Lord Jesus Christ, as having undertaken and performed that painful work of suffering even unto death, yea, that of the cross. 2. I must look upon those grievous, painful, shameful sufferings of Christ as very strange and wonderful; but especially the spiritual part of his sufferings, *viz.* the sense and apprehension of God's forsaking and afflicting him in the day of his fierce anger. How should I but stand aghast at these so wonderful sufferings of Jesus Christ! 3. I must weigh and consider what it was that caused all this, *viz.* sin, yea, my sin; yea, this and that sin particularly. This comes nearer home, and from this I must now gather these several conclusions.

1. It was the design of Christ, by his sufferings, to give satisfaction to the infinite justice of God for sin. 2. It was intended to give the world a most eminent demonstration of the odiousness and execrableness of sin. 3. It holds forth, as sin is horrid in itself, so it cannot but be exceeding grievous and offensive to Christ; it put him to all this pain. How then should it but offend him above any thing in the world! 4. If therefore there be in me any spark of love towards Christ, or any likeness to Christ, or if I would have Christ bear any love unto me, it will absolutely behove me by all means to loath sin, and cast it away from me; to root it up, to quit my hands, and to rid my heart of it. The truth is, I cannot possibly give forth a more pregnant proof of my sincere love to Christ, than by offering all violence, all holy severity, against sin for his sake.

Now when the heart is thus exercised, God, by his Spirit, will not fail to meet us; our desire and endeavour to weaken and kill sin in the soul is not without its reward; but especially when sin hath in this way, and by this means, lost the affection of the soul, and is brought into hatred and disesteem, it decays and dies of itself: so matters going thus and thus in the heart, the influence that should nourish sin is cut off, and it withers by degrees till it be finally destroyed.

Sect. VI.—*Of Loving Jesus in that respect.*

Let us love Jesus as carrying on the great work of our salvation during his sufferings and death. What! did he suffer and die? *Greater love than this hath no man, that a man should give his life for his friends.—But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.* Here's an argument of love indeed; how should we but love him who thus loved us? In prosecution of this, I have no more to do, but first to shew Christ's love to us, and to exercise our love to him again.

1. For his love to us: it is worth our while to consider it in an holy meditation.—Indeed, with what less than ravishment of spirit can I behold the Lord Jesus, who from everlasting was clothed with glory and majesty, now exposed to hunger, thirst, weariness, danger, contempt, poverty, revilings, scourgings, persecution! But let them pass: into what ecstacies may I be cast, to see the Judge of all the world accused, judged, condemned! to see the Lord of life dying upon the tree of shame and curse! to see the eternal Son of God struggling with his Father's wrath! to see him who had said, *I and my Father are one,* sweating drops of blood in his agony, and crying, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* O whither hath his love to mankind carried him? Had he only sent his creatures to serve us, had he only sent his prophets to advise us in the way to heaven; had he only sent his angels from his chamber of presence to attend us, and to minister to us, it had been a great deal of mercy: or if it must be so, had Christ come down from heaven himself, only to visit us, or had he come only and wept over us, saying, 'O that you had known, even in this your day, the things belonging to your peace! O that you had more considered my goodness! O that you had never sinned!' this would have been such a mercy as that all the world would have wondered at it: but that Christ himself should come, and lay down his life for his people; and yet I am not at the lowest, that he should not only part with life, but part with the sense and sweetness of God's love, which is a thousand times better than life; that he should be content to be accursed, that we might be blessed; that he should be content to be forsaken, that we might not be

forsaken; that he should be content to be condemned, that we might be acquitted: O what raptures of spirit can be sufficient for the admiration of this infinite mercy! Be thou swallowed up, O my soul, in this depth of divine love; and hate to spend thy thoughts any more upon the base objects of this world.

Look upon him! He hangs on the cross all naked, torn, and bloody; betwixt heaven and earth; he hath a crown indeed, but such a one as few men will touch, none will take from him: his hair is all clotted with blood, his face all clouded with black and blue; he is all over pitifully rent, outwards, inwards, body and soul. I will think the rest: alas! had I the tongues of men and angels, I could not express it. O love more deep than hell! O love more high than heaven! The brightest seraphims that burn in love, are but as sparkles to that mighty flame of love in the heart of Jesus.

2. If this be Christ's love to us, what is that love we owe to Christ! O now for a heart that might be some ways answerable to these mercies! O for a soul sick of love, yea, sick unto death! This only sickness is our health, this death our life; and not to be thus sick, is to be dead in sins and trespasses: why, surely I have heard enough, for which to love Christ for ever. The depths of God's grace are bottomless, they pass our understanding, yet they recreate our hearts; they give matter of admiration, yet they are not devoid of consolation. O God, raise up our souls to thee; and if our spirits be too weak to know thee, make our affections ardent and sincere to love thee.

The whole gospel is no other thing than a motive to draw man to God by the force of God's love to man. In this sense the holy scriptures may be called the Book of true Love, seeing therein God both unfolds his love to us, and also binds our love to him; but of all the motives we may draw from Christ, and of all the arguments we may find in the gospel of Christ, there is none to this, the death of Christ, the blood of Jesus. Is not this such a love-letter as never was the like? Read the words, *For his great love wherewith he loved us*, Eph. ii. 4. O consider it, is not this a great love? Are not all mercies wrapt up in the blood of Christ? It may be thou hast riches, honours, friends, means; O but thank the blood of Christ for all thou hast. It may be thou hast grace, and that is better than corn, or wine, or oil! For this thank the blood of Jesus; surely it was the blood of Christ that did this for thee; thou wast a rebellious soul, thou hast a hard and filthy heart, but Christ's blood was the fountain opened, and it took away all sin and all uncleanness. Christ is in all, and Christ above all, and wilt thou not love him? O that all our words were words of love; and all our labour, labour of love; and all our thoughts, thoughts of love,—that we might speak of love, and muse of love, and love this

Christ, who hath first loved us, with all our heart, and soul, and might!

Sect. VII.—*Of Joying in Jesus in that respect.*

Let us joy in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in his sufferings and death. What! hath Christ suffered for us? hath he drunk off all the cup of God's wrath, and left none for us? how should we but be cheered! Precious souls, why are you afraid? There is no death, no hell, *no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.* There is no divine justice for them to undergo, that have their share in this death of Christ. O the grace and mercy that is purchased by this means of Christ! O the waters of comfort that flow from the sufferings and obedience of Christ! Christ was amazed, that we might be cheered; Christ was imprisoned, that we might be delivered; Christ was accused, that we might be acquitted; Christ was condemned, that we might be redeemed; Christ suffered his Father's wrath, that the victory might be ours, and that in the end we might see him face to face in glory. Is not here matter of joy? It may be, sin, and justice, and conscience, and death, and hell, may appear as enemies; but is there not enough in the blood of Christ to chase them away? Give me leave but to frame the objections of some doubting souls, and see whether Christ's death will not sufficiently answer them all.

1. One cries thus, 'O! I know not what will become of me, my sins are ever before me: *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.* I have sinned against a most dear, and gracious, and merciful God and Father, in our Lord Jesus. O the aggravations of my sins! Are they not sins above measure sinful?'

It may be so, but the blood of Christ is *a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness.*—*And now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.*—As the scape-goat under the law had upon his head all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and so was *sent away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness;* so the Lord Jesus (of whom that goat was a type) had all our iniquities laid upon him by God his Father, and bearing them, he took them away; *Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world!* He went away with them into the wilderness, or into the land of forgetfulness. See what comfort is here.

2. Another cries thus, 'O! I know not what will become of me, I have transgressed the law, and it speaks terribly: *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.*

Say not so; for by the death of Christ, though the law be broken, yet the curse is removed. The apostle is clear; *Christ*

hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. He was made a curse for us; that is, the fruits and effects of God's curse, the punishment due to sinners, the penal curse which justice required, was laid upon Christ, and by this means we are freed from the curse of the law. *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus:* the law is satisfied, and the bond is cancelled. O what comfort is this!

3. Another cries thus, 'O! I know not what will become of me, I have offended justice; and what, shall I appeal from the seat of justice to the throne of grace! My sins are gone before, and they are knocking at heaven-gates, and crying, Justice, Lord, on this sinner.'

By this death of Christ, free grace and justice are both thy friends. Thou needest not appeal from the court of justice to the mercy-seat. In this mystery of godliness there may be as much comfort in standing before the bar of justice, as at the mercy-seat. And yet I speak not against relying on God's mercy for pardon: but what need we appeal from justice to mercy, when by faith we may tender the death of Christ, and so find acceptance with the justice of God itself? Come, and let me tell thee, if thou hast any share in the death of Christ, thou hast two tenures to hold thy pardon by, mercy and justice, free grace and righteousness; mercy in respect of thee, and justice in respect of Christ. Not only is free grace ready to acquit thee, but a full price is laid down to discharge thee of all thy sins: so that now when the prince of this world comes against thee, thou mayest say, 'How can he accuse me, seeing Christ is my surety; seeing the bond hath been sued, and Christ Jesus would not leave one farthing unpaid?'

4. Another cries thus, 'O! I know not what will become of me; I see death standing before me: O, this is he that is the king of fears, the inlet to all those plagues in another world, and die I must, there is no remedy: O! I startle, and am afraid of it.'

And why so? *It is Christ that died,* and by his death took away the sting of death. Come, meditate upon the death of Christ, and thou shalt find matter enough in his death, for the subduing of thy fears of death, both in the merit of it, in the effect of it, and in the end of it. 1. In the merit of it; Christ's death is meritorious, and, in that respect, the writ of mortality is but to the saints a writ of ease, a passage into glory. 2. In the effect of it, Christ's death is the conquest of death; Christ went down into the grave, that the grave, which was before a prison, might now be a thoroughfare, so that all his saints may with ease pass through, and sing, *O death, where is thy sting?* 3. In the end of it, Christ's death, amongst other ends, aims at the ruin of him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and to deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their life-

time in bondage. Christ pursued this end in dying, to deliver thee from the fear of death; and if now thou fearest, thy fearing is a kind of making Christ's death of none effect. O come, and with joy draw water out of this well of salvation!

Come then, and comfort yourselves, all believers, in this death of Christ; do you believe? Why then do you sit drooping? *What manner of communications are these that you have, as ye walk and are sad?* Away, disquietness of spirit; Christ is dead, that you might live; in this respect every thing speaks comfort; God and men, heaven and earth, angels and devils; the very justice of God is now your friend, and bids you go away comforted, for it is satisfied to the full; heaven itself waits on you, and keeps the doors open, that your souls may enter. O my soul, I see thou art poring on sin, on thy crimson sins, but I would have thee dwell on that crimson blood of Christ; it is *the blood of sprinkling*, it *speaks better things than the blood of Abel;* it cries for mercy, and pardon, and refreshing, and salvation: thy sins cry, Lord, do me justice against such a soul: but the blood of Christ hath another cry; I am abased, I have answered all. Methinks this should make thy heart leap for joy; it is the spiritual wine that makes merry the heart of man; and it is the voice of Christ to all his guests, 'Eat, O friends; drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved.'

Sect. VIII.—*Of Calling on Jesus in that respect.*

Let us call on Jesus, or on God the Father, in and through Jesus.

1. We must pray that all these transactions of Christ in his sufferings and death may be ours; if we direct our prayers immediately to Jesus Christ, let us tell him what pains he hath suffered for our sakes; and let us complain against ourselves, 'O what shall we do, who by our sins have so tormented our dearest Lord? What contrition can be great enough, what tears sufficient, what hatred and detestation equal to those sad and heavy sufferings of our Jesus?' And then let us pray, that he would pity us, and forgive us those sins wherewith we crucified him; that he would bestow on us the virtue of his death, that his wounds might heal us, his death might quicken us, and his blood might cleanse us from all our filth of sin; and lastly, that he would assure us that his death is ours; that he would persuade us, *that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature, should be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

2. We must praise the Lord for all these sufferings of Christ. Hath he indeed suffered all these punishments for us? Then, what shall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits? What

shall we do for him, who hath done and suffered all these things? But especially, if we believe our part in the death of Christ; in all the virtues, benefits, victories, purchases, and privileges of his precious death; then what manifold cause of thankfulness and praise is here? Be enlarged, O my soul; sound forth the praises of thy Christ, tell all the world of that love of Christ, which flowed with his blood out of all his wounds into thy spirit; tune thy heart-strings aright, and keep concert with all the angels of heaven, and all his saints on earth; sing that psalm of John the divine: *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

Sect. IX.—*Of Conforming to Jesus in that respect.*

Let us conform to Jesus in respect of his sufferings and death: looking unto Jesus is effective of this. Come then, and let us look on Christ, and conform to Christ in this respect.

In this particular, I shall examine these queries; 1. Wherein we must conform? 2. What is the cause of this conformity? 3. What are the means of this conformity?

For the first, Wherein we must conform? I answer, In his graces, sufferings, and death.

1. In the graces that most eminently shined in his bitter passion; his life indeed was a gracious life, but his graces shined most clearly at his death: I shall instance in some of them.

(1.) His humility; that the most high God of God, should vouchsafe to be contemned, and less esteemed than Barabbas a murderer; that Christ should be crucified betwixt two thieves, as if he had been the ringleader of all malefactors; O what humility was this!

(2.) His patience; *Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps;—who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.* O the patience of Christ!

(3.) His love; *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.* This love is an exemplar of all love, it is the fire that should kindle all our sparks: *Be ye followers of God,* saith the apostle, *as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savour.* Some observe, that in the temple there were two altars, the brazen and the golden; the brazen altar was for bloody sacrifices, the golden altar was for the offering of incense: now the former was a type of Christ's bloody offering upon the cross, the latter of Christ's intercession for us in his

glory; in regard of both, the apostle tells that Christ gave himself both for an *offering and sacrifice of sweet-smelling savour unto God.* O what love was this!

(4.) His meekness; in all his passion, he shewed not the least anger; he suffered himself to be carried like a sheep to the butchery, and *as a lamb before the shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth: he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter:* a lamb goes as quietly to the shambles, as if it were going to the fold: and so went Christ to his cross. O the meekness of Christ!

(5.) His obedience: *He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.—He sought not his own will, but the will of him that sent him.* There was a command that the Father laid on Christ from all eternity: 'O my Son, my only begotten Son, thou must go down, and leave heaven, and empty thyself, and die the death, even the death of the cross, and go and bring up the fallen sons of Adam out of hell.' All which the Lord Jesus did in time; he was obedient to death, even to the death of the cross.

Now in all these graces we must conform to Christ. *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly.*—And, *walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us.* It is as if Christ had said, Mark the steps where I have trod, and follow me in humility, in patience, in love, in meekness, in obedience unto death.

We must conform to Christ in his sufferings, if he calls us to them; this was the apostle's prayer, *That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings:* it was his desire that he might experimentally know what exceeding joy and comfort it was to suffer for Christ, and with Christ. Concerning this, the other apostle speaks also, *Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps.* But the text that seems so pertinent, and yet so difficult, is that of Paul; *I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his body's sake, which is the church.* One would wonder how Paul should fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ: were Christ's sufferings imperfect, and must Paul add to them? no surely? *for by one offering, Christ hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.* I suppose this is the genuine meaning of the passage. *Now rejoice I in my sufferings for you, whereby I fulfil the measure of these tribulations, which remain yet to be endured of Christ in his mystical body, which I do for the body's sake, not to satisfy for it, but to confirm it, to strengthen it, by my example in the gospel of Christ.* The sufferings of Christ are either personal or general; his personal sufferings were those he endured in his own body, as Mediator; which once for ever he finished. His general sufferings are those which he endures in his mystical body, the church; as he is a member with the

rest; and these are the sufferings Paul speaks of, and which Paul fills up.

But wherein is the conformity betwixt our sufferings, and the sufferings of Christ? I answer:

1. Our sufferings have no conformity with Christ in these two things. 1. Not in the office of Christ's sufferings; for his were meritorious and satisfactory, our's only for edification. 2. Not in the weight and measure of Christ's sufferings; for his were such as would have pressed any other creature as low as hell.

2. Our sufferings must have conformity with Christ. 1. In the cause of them: Christ's sufferings were instrumentally from Satan and wicked men; we must look to suffer by the enemies of Christ, if we have any share in Christ. 2. In the manner of undergoing them; we must suffer with a proportion of that humility, and patience, and love, and meekness, and obedience, which Christ shewed in his sufferings. 3. In respect of the issue of them; we must look upon Christ's issue, and expect it to be our's. *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so enter into glory?*—And, *If so be that we suffer with Christ, we shall be glorified together with Christ.—If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.*

By reason of this conformity, we have communion with Christ in all these particulars; as, 1. We have Christ's strength to bear sufferings. 2. His victories to overcome sufferings. 3. His intercession to preserve us from falling away in sufferings. 4. His compassion to proportion our sufferings to the measure of strength which he hath given us. 5. His Spirit to draw in the same yoke with us, and to hold us under all sufferings, that we sink not. 6. His graces, to be more glorious by our sufferings; as a torch, when it is shaken, shines the brighter. 7. His crown to reward our sufferings, when we shall have tasted our measure of them.

O my soul! study this conformity, and be content with thy portion: yea, comfort thyself in this condition of sufferings; must we not drink of our Saviour's cup? Never wonder that thou art hated or persecuted of men: why, I tell thee, if Christ himself were now amongst us in the form of a servant, in that very condition that sometimes he was, and should convince men of their wickedness, as searchingly as sometimes he did, I verily think he would be the most hated man in all the world.

3. We must conform to Christ in his death, carrying in us a resemblance and representation of his death. But what death is this? I answer in a word, A death unto sin: so the apostle, *In that he died, he died unto sin;—likewise reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin.* There is a likeness betwixt Christ's death, and our death, in this respect; *we are planted together*

in the likeness of his death. True mortification carries a resemblance of the death of Christ. As for instance,

1. Christ's death was a voluntary death. *I lay down my life that I may take it again; no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.* Not all men on earth, nor all devils in hell, could have enforced Christ's death, if he had not pleased: his death was a spontaneous act; so is our mortification. *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power:* many may leave their sins against their wills; but this is not true mortification; it bears not in it the likeness of Christ's death, for he died willingly.

2. Christ's death was a violent death; he died not naturally, but violently; *He was put to death in the flesh; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter.* So is our mortification, it is voluntary in respect of us, but violent in respect of sin: when a man lays violent hands on his sins; when he cuts them off, being yet in their strength; when he pulls up those weeds before they wither in themselves, this is true mortification.

3. What is the cause of this conformity? I answer, The death of Christ.

1. It is a meritorious cause; Christ's death was of so great a price, that it deserved at God's hands our conformity to Christ: *Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that by his death he might sanctify it, and cleanse it;—and present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

2. It is an examplary cause; *He suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps.* He died for us, leaving us an example that we should die to sin, as he died for sin.

3. It is an efficient cause, it works this conformity by a secret virtue issuing from it. Thus Christians are said to be *engrafted with Christ in the likeness of his death.*

4. It is an impelling, or a moving cause, as all objects are; for objects have an attractive power. Christ crucified doth heal sin, beget grace, encourage to sufferings by being looked upon with the eyes of faith; look unto Jesus, and the very sight of him will draw you after him. Christ crucified hath an attractive power. *And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men to me.*

5. What are the means of this conformity? I answer:

1. Go to the cross of Jesus Christ. It is not all our resolutions, promises, vows, endeavours, without this, that will effect our conformity to Christ in his death; no, this conformity is a fruit of the death of Christ, and therefore whosoever would have this work wrought in him, let him first have recourse to Christ's cross.

2. Look up to him that hangs upon it, contemplate the death

of Jesus Christ; consider seriously his bitter, shameful, painful sufferings. Much hath been said, only here draw it into some epitome: as, 1. Consider who he was. 2. What he suffered. 3. Why he suffered. 4. For whom he suffered. 5. For what end he suffered. 6. With what mind he suffered. Every one of these will make some discoveries either of his graces, or of his gracious actings in our behalf; and who can tell how far this very look may work on us to change us, and transform us into the image of Jesus Christ?

3. Let us humbly bewail our defect and inconformity, either to the graces, sufferings, or death of Christ. As thus: "Lo here the profound humility, wonderful patience, fervent love, admirable meekness, constant obedience, of Jesus Christ! These are the particulars to which I shall conform. But, O alas! what a wide distance is there betwixt me and them! Christ in his sufferings shined with graces, his graces appeared in his sufferings, like so many stars in a bright winter's night; but how dim are the graces in my soul! His sorrows and sufferings were so great, that some think it dangerous to define them: but how poor, how little, are my sufferings for Jesus Christ! I have not yet resisted unto blood, and if I had, what were this in comparison of his sufferings! Christ in his sufferings died; his passive obedience was unto death, even to the death of the cross: he hung on the cross till he bowed his head and gave up the ghost; he died unto sin once; but, alas! how do I live in that for which he died? To this day my sin hath not given up the ghost; to this day the death of Christ is not the death of my sin; my sin is not yet crucified: O how unanswerable am I to Christ in all these respects!"

4. Let us quicken, provoke, and rouse up our souls to this conformity; let us set before them exciting arguments: *ex. gr.* The greatest glory that a Christian can attain to in this world, is to have a resemblance to Jesus Christ. Again, the more like we are to Christ, the better he is pleased with us. Again, A likeness to Christ in his death, will cause a likeness to Christ in his glory: *if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.* Thus let us quicken and provoke our souls to this conformity.

5. Let us pray to God that he will make us conformable to Jesus Christ. Is it grace we want? Let us beg of him, that of that fulness that is in Christ, we may in our measure receive grace for grace. Is it patience, or joy in sufferings, that we want? Let us beg of him, that as he hath promised, he will send us the Comforter, that we may follow Christ cheerfully, from his cross to his crown, from earth to heaven. Is it mortification our souls pant after? This indeed makes us most like to Christ in his sufferings and death; why then, pray we for this mortification.

6. Let us frequently return to our looking unto Jesus Christ, to our believing in Christ, as he was lifted up. There is something flowing into the soul, while it is acting faith on the death of Christ, which, for the rise, or the manner of its working, is beyond what tongue can speak, or pen can write, or pencil can delineate. Come then, if we would have grace, endure afflictions, die to sin, grow in mortification: let us again and again return to our duty of looking unto Jesus, or believing in Jesus, as he was lifted up.

LOOKING UNTO JESUS,

IN HIS RESURRECTION.

BOOK VI.

CHAP. I.

SECT. I.—*Of the Time and Reasons of Christ's Resurrection.*

THE sun, that went down in a ruddy cloud, is risen again with glorious beams. In this piece, as in the former, we shall first lay down the object, and then give directions how to look upon it.

The object is Jesus, carrying on the great work of man's salvation in his resurrection, and during the time of his abode on earth after his resurrection. Now in all the transactions of this time, I shall only take notice of these two things: 1. Of his resurrection. 2. Of his apparitions. First, he arose; and secondly, he shews himself that he was risen.

The scripture tells us, that he rose again the third day. In this point I shall observe these particulars. 1. When he arose. 2. Why he arose. 3. How he arose.

1. When he arose; it was the third day after his crucifying. Had he rose sooner, a doubt might have been of his dying.

2. Why he arose. We have these reasons:

(1.) That he might powerfully convince or confound his adversaries, notwithstanding their care, their watch, their seal, their making all as sure as possibly they could; at the very same time he told them before, he broke open the gates of death, and made the gates of brass to fly asunder.

(2.) That he might confirm the faith of all his followers. *If Christ be not risen your faith is vain,* saith the apostle. Christ's resurrection both confirms our faith, as to his person, and to his office: for his person; this speaks him to be the eternal Son of God, by the resurrection from the dead: and as for his office, this speaks him to be the promised Messiah, the King and Saviour of his church.

(3.) That it might appear he had fully satisfied the justice of God for sin: so it was, that God laid the forfeiture of the bond on Christ; he arrested him, brought him to the goal, the grave, and there he was until the debt was paid to the uttermost farthing; and then, that it might clearly appear the bond was cancelled, he arose again from the dead.

(4.) That he might conquer sin, death, and the devil: and hence the apostle cries victory upon the occasion of Christ's resurrection: *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?* Now was the day that he spoiled principalities and powers, that he trode on the serpent's head, that he came upon him, took from him his armour wherein he trusted, and divided his spoils.

(5.) That he might become *the first-fruits of them that slept.* Christ is called the first-fruits in a double respect. 1. In respect of the day whereon he rose: Paul was an excellent critic, the very feast carried him to the word, as the day of his passion was the day of the passover; and the apostle thence could say, *Christ is our passover,* 1 Cor. xv. 7. So the day of Christ's rising was the day of the first-fruits; and the apostle thence could say, *Christ is our first-fruits.* Concerning this feast of the first-fruits, we read, Lev. xxii. 10, 11. It was their first harvest of their basest grain, barley; the full harvest of their best grain of wheat, was not until pentecost. Now, upon this day, the morrow after the sabbath, the beginning of their first harvest, when the sheaf of their first-fruits was brought unto the priest, and waved before the Lord, Christ arose from the dead, and in this respect Paul calls him the *first-fruits of them that sleep,* of all the saints. He arose first on this day; for the full harvest is not till the general resurrection-day. 2. He is called the first-fruits in respect of them whom he there sanctified: for as an handful of the first-fruits sanctified the whole field of corn that was growing; so Jesus Christ, the first-fruits of the dead, sanctifies all those who are lying in the grave to rise again by his power, even when they are in the dust of death. *If Christ be not risen,* saith the apostle, *ye are yet in your sins.—But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that sleep.*

(6.) That being formerly abased as a servant, and crucified as a sinner, he might thus be declared to be the Son of God, and exalted to be a Prince and Saviour; and so his name might be

glorified of all the world. *He was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.* It was of necessary consequence, that he that was so humbled, must be thus exalted: *therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death.* Of all the reasons of Christ's resurrection, we must look upon this as the main; for as he hath made all things for his own glory, *so Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father;* by the glory, or to the glory, or for the glory, of himself, and of his Father.

Sect. II.—*Of the Manner of Christ's Resurrection.*

How he rose; the manner of his resurrection we may consider in these particulars:

1. That Christ rose again as a common person, he stood in our stead; Adam, we know, was reckoned before the fall as a common person, not standing singly for himself, but as representing all mankind to come of him; so Jesus Christ is reckoned to us, both before his death, and in his death, and after his death, as a common person; not living, dying, or rising again, singly, for himself, but as representing all the believers in the world. As among all the sheaves in the field, there was some one sheaf, that in the name of all the rest was lift up and waved before the Lord; so when all were dead, Christ as the first-fruits rose again from the dead. Let this ever be remembered, that Christ rose again as the first-fruits, as an head, as a common person.

2. That Christ rose again by his own power: this he meant when he said, *Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.* He saith not, Destroy you, and some other shall raise it up; no: but I, even I myself, will do it; yea, and by my own power: here is a plain argument of the divine nature of Christ, for none ever did, ever could do that, but God himself.

It is true that the Father raised him, and yet this contradicts not but that he raised up himself: *Whatsoever the Father doth, I do,* saith Christ. Christ's resurrection is the invisible work of the blessed Trinity; it is a work common to all the three persons: there is but one power of the Father, and of the Son; so that of both it is true, the Father raised him, and the Son raised himself.

3. That Christ rose again with an earthquake: *And behold there was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven.* The earth shook at his death, and now it trembles at his resurrection; plainly speaking that it could neither endure his suffering, nor hinder his rising.

4. That Christ rose again, *angels ministering to him. An angel came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sate upon it.* Christ's power was not included in the grave, but extended to heaven, and to the hosts therein: however, the chief priests and Pharises conspired together to close him in the earth; they sealed the stone, and set a watch; yet, the angels of heaven are ready to wait on him as their sovereign Lord. An angel descended to roll away the stone: not that Christ was unable to do it himself; he shook the earth, and could not he lift a stone? O yes! but thus he would manifest his power, by declaring his power over the mighty angels; he need but to say unto his angel, Do this, and he doth it.

5. That Christ rose again accompanied with others: *And the graves were opened, and many bodies of saints which slept, arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.* It may be the graves were opened when Christ was laid down in his grave, yet the spirits came not into the dead bodies till Christ's resurrection; the text is plain, that they came not out of their graves until Christ was raised. *Christ is the beginning,* saith the apostle, *the first-born from the dead,* both in time and efficacy. 1. In time; he rose to eternal life the first of all men. 2. In respect of efficacy; Christ rose first, that by his power all the rest might rise. It is a question what became of those bodies which now rose: some think they died again; but it is more probable, that seeing they rose to manifest the quickening virtue of Christ's resurrection, they were also glorified with Christ: and as they rose with Christ arising, so they ascended up into heaven with Christ ascending.

6. That Christ rose again with a true, perfect, incorruptible, powerful, spiritual, agile, and glorious body.

1. He had a true body, consisting of flesh, and blood, and bone; so he told his disciples when they supposed him a spirit: *Handle me, and see,* said he, *for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.* I know, this body, after his resurrection, was comparatively a spiritual body; yet for all that, he never laid aside the essential properties of a true body.

2. He had a perfect body: however he was cut and mangled before his death, yet after his resurrection all was perfect.

3. He had an incorruptible, immortal body. The apostle is express: *Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.* Consonant hereunto is that of Christ; *I am he that liveth, and was dead! and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen.*

4. He had a powerful body. Luther could say of the glorified saints, that they had a power so great as to toss the greatest mountains in the world like a ball. and Anselm hath an expression not much unlike, "They have such a power, as they

are able to shake the whole earth at their pleasure." How much more could Christ cause that great earthquake at the rising of his body!

5. He had a spiritual body: it needed not meat, drink, or refreshings, as it did before; it is true, that the disciples *gave him a piece of broiled fish, and of an honey comb, and he took it, and did eat before them;* but this he did only to confirm their faith; he ate out of power, and not out of necessity.

6. He had an agile body: it was in his pleasure to move as well upwards as downwards, as it may appear by the ascension of his body into heaven; which was not caused by constraint, or by any violent motion, but a property agreeing to all bodies glorified. Augustine hath an expression concerning the glorified saints, "That they shall move to any place they will, and as soon as they will;" they shall move up and down like a thought: how much more may it be said of the body of Christ!

7. He had a glorious body: this appeared in his transfiguration, *when his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as light;* but especially after his resurrection and ascension, *when his head and his hair were white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace.* It is true, that from his resurrection, until his ascension, his body appeared not thus glorious unto them that saw it: but whether his glory was delayed during his forty days' abode upon earth, or whether he so far condescended for his disciples' sake, as to keep in his glory, that it might not dazzle them, is hard to determine. I am apt to think, that in some sort he might draw in the beams of his glory, and yet that he was not entered into that fulness of glory, as after his ascension; and so some expound those words of Christ to Mary, *Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father;* q. d. Fix not your thoughts so much upon my present condition, for I have not yet attained the highest pitch of my exaltation, nor shall I until I ascend unto my Father.

From this resurrection of Christ, how are we informed that Christ is the Son of God? Thus Paul speaks, *He was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.*—And how are we informed that Christ is Lord over all things? *For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.*—And how are we informed that Christ rose again for us? *But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that sleep.*—And how are we informed that by his resurrection we are justified? *Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification:* and that by his resurrection at the last day we shall be raised; *for the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies:* and that by his resurrection

finally we shall be saved; for after we are raised, *we shall never die any more, but be equal unto the angels, and be the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.*

Sect. III.—*Of the Arguments of Christ's Resurrection.*

Christ after his passion shewed himself alive by many infallible proofs. And so he had need, to persuade men into the faith of so strange a truth; if we consult with primitive times, or latter times, never was matter carried on with more scruple, and slowness of belief, with more doubts and difficulties, than was this truth of Christ's resurrection. Mary Magdalen saw it first, and reported it; *but they believed her not,* Mark xvi. 10. The two disciples that went to Emmaus, they saw it also, and reported it, but *they believed them not,* Luke xxiii. 37. Divers women together saw him, and came and told the disciples; but *their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not,* Luke xxiv. 11. They all saw him, and even seeing him, *yet they believed not for joy, but wondered,* Luke xxiv. 41. When the wonder was over, and the rest told it but to one that happened to be absent, you know how peremptory he was: not he; *except he saw in his hands the print of the nails, and put his fingers into the print of the nails, and thrust his hands into his side, he would not believe,* John xx. 25.—In after-times the whole world stopt their ears at this report of the resurrection of Christ, it was with the Grecians at Athens a very scorn; *when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked,* Acts xvii. 22. It was with Festus, the great Roman, a plain frenzy; Festus said with a loud voice, *Paul, thou art besides thyself, much learning doth make thee mad,* Acts xxvi. 24.—But come we to our own times, the resurrection of Christ is to this day as much opposed by Jews and Atheists, as any one article of our creed. And surely we had need to look to it; *for if Christ be not risen,* (as the apostle argues,) *then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain,* 1 Cor. xv. 14. *If Christ be not risen, ye are yet in your sins; and they which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished,* 1 Cor. xv. 17, 18. Of all the precious truths in the book of God, we had need to be well skilled in the defending this of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

I mean not to enter into controversies; only I shall declare those clear demonstrations, that substantially prove Christ to have risen again; namely, the several apparitions that Christ made to others after his resurrection.

1. He appeared to Mary Magdalen apart. As a woman was the first instrument of death, so was a woman the first messenger of life.

2. He appeared to all the Marys together, as they returned

homewards from the sepulchre: never any truly sought for Christ, but, with these women, they were sure to find Christ.

3. He appeared to Simon Peter alone; he first went into the sepulchre, and he first saw him that was raised thence.

4. He appeared to the two disciples journeying towards Emmaus: the name of the one was Cleopas; and probable it is, the other was Luke, "who out of modesty concealed his own name," saith Theophilact.

5. He appeared unto the ten apostles, when the doors were shut.

6. He appeared to all his disciples, and Thomas was with them; and then he shewed them his wounds, to strengthen the weak faith of his wavering servants.

7. He appeared to Peter, and John, and James, and Nathaniel, and Didymus, and two other disciples, when they were a-fishing at the sea of Tiberias: there he proved the verity of his deity, by that miracle of the fishes; and the verity of his humanity, by eating meat with them.

8. He appeared unto more than five hundred brethren at once; of this we read not in the evangelists, but the apostle Paul records it.

9. He appeared unto James the brother of the Lord: *i. e.* the cousin-german of Christ according to the flesh; called James the Just, in regard of his upright life.

10. He appeared to the eleven disciples, on mount Tabor in Galilee. And this Matthew intimates, when Jesus bade the woman tell his brethren that he was risen, and that they should go into Galilee, and there they should see him; and accordingly in that mountain where Jesus had appointed them, they saw him, and worshipped him.

11. He appeared to all his apostles and disciples upon mount Olivet by Jerusalem, when in the presence of them all he ascended up into heaven.

12. He appeared unto Paul travelling unto Damascus.

My meaning is not to speak of all these apparitions in order, but of the most considerable.

Sect. IV.—*Of Christ's Apparition to Mary Magdalen.*

On the first day were many apparitions: but I shall speak only to one or two, as related by the evangelist John.

1. Christ appeared to Mary Magdalen apart: *The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalen, early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre:* she came whilst it was yet dark; she departed from home before day, and by that time she came to the sepulchre, the sun was about to rise; thither come, she finds the stone rolled away, and the body of Jesus gone: upon this she runs to Peter

and John, and tells them, *They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.* Then Peter and John ran to see; they looked into the sepulchre, and not finding the body there, they presently returned. By this time Mary Magdalen was come back, and howsoever the disciples would not stay, yet she was resolved to abide by it, and to see the issue.

We find this apparition, for our farther assurance, compassed and set about with each needful circumstance: here is the time when, the place where, the persons to whom, the manner how, he appeared; together with the consequents after his apparition.

1. For the time when he appeared: *Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning.* It was the first day of the week, the next day to their sabbath; and it was very early in the morning: the apparition was early, but Mary's seeking Christ was so early, that it was yet dark: she sought him early whom she loved entirely; they that will not seek Christ until they have given over seeking other things, may justly fear to miss Christ.

2. For the place where he appeared: it was in the garden, where Christ was buried.

3. For the person to whom he appeared: it was Mary Magdalen; she that sometimes lived a sinful life, that was no better than a common courtezan, now is first up to seek our Saviour. Let never any despair of mercy. Her love to Christ appears at this time: *But Mary stood without at the sepulchre, weeping; and as she wept she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre.*

(1.) *Mary stood at the sepulchre;* she stood by the grave of Christ; it signifies her great love: Mary chuseth Christ's tomb for her best home, and his dead corpse for her chief comfort; having lost that light of the Sun of righteousness, she desired to dwell in darkness, in the shadow of death.

(2.) *But Mary stood at the sepulchre, weeping.* This was love indeed; see how every word is a degree of love. She cannot think of Jesus as lost, but she weeps; she weeps for having lost him whom she loved; at first she mourned for the departure of his soul out of his body, and now she laments the taking his body out of the grave.

(3.) *And as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre.* She did so weep as she did seek withal; her weeping hindered not her seeking: she sought, to what purpose? that Christ is not in the tomb, her own eyes have seen, the disciples' hands have felt; and yet for all this she will be stooping down, and looking in; she would rather condemn her own eyes of error, she would rather suspect all testimonies for untrue, than not to look after him whom she had lost.

4. For the manner how he appeared; it was first by his angels, and secondly by himself.

(1.) There was an apparition of angels: she seeth *two angels in white, sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.* The apparition of angels was only a preparation to Christ's apparition.

In this apparition we see further, a question and answer: the angels question Mary, *Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.* Here was the cause of Mary's tears; she knew not whither to go to find any comfort; her Lord is gone, his life is gone, his soul is gone, his body is gone; yea, gone, and carried she knows not whither.

(2.) After this, Christ himself appears, but first as unknown, and then as known. 1. As unknown, *She turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? she supposing him to be the gardener,* &c. In this apparition of Christ unknown, I shall only take notice of Christ's question, and Mary's inquisition; his question is in these words: *Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?* 1. *Why weepest thou?* As if he had said, There is no cause of weeping now; lo, I am risen from the dead, and become the first-born of them that sleep!

(3.) *Whom seekest thou?* She seeks Christ, and Christ asks her, *Woman, whom seekest thou?* A shower of tears comes betwixt her and him, and she cannot see him, or it may be, *her eyes were holden that she should not know him;* or it may be he appeared in some other shape, such as resembled the gardener, whom she took him for.

(4.) For Mary's inquiry: *she, supposing him to be the gardener, Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.*

Her words to Christ are not much unlike the answer she gave the angels; only she seems to speak more harsh to Christ, than she did to the angels: to them she complains of others; *They have taken away my Lord;* but to Christ she speaks as if she would charge him with the fact. But pardon love; as it fears where it needs not, so it suspects very often where it hath no cause: when love is at a loss, he, or any that comes but in our way, hath done it, hath taken him away.

Something she spoke now to Christ, which she had not mentioned to the angels. She said unto them, *Tell me where he is, and I will take him away:* there is no essay too hard for love; she speaks without fear, she promises without condition, she makes no exception, as if nothing were impossible that love suggesteth.

5. Christ appears as known: *Jesus saith unto her, Mary; she turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master.—Sorrow may endure for a night, but joy comes in the*

morning. She that hitherto had sought without finding, and wept without comfort, and called without answer, even to her Christ now appears; and at his apparition these passages are betwixt them: first, he speaks unto her, *Mary;* and then she replies unto him, *Rabboni, which is to say, Master.*

1. He speaks unto her, *Mary!* it was but a word, but O what life! what spirit! what quickening and reviving was in the word! the voice of Christ is powerful; "If the Spirit of Christ come alone with the word, it will rouse hearts, raise spirits, work wonders." And at this word her tears are dried up; no more tears now, unless they be tears for joy. Observe the way how you may know the voice of Jesus Christ: if it be effectual, it usually singles a man out; yea, though it be generally spoken by a minister; yet the voice of Christ will speak particularly to the very heart of a man, with a marvellous kind of majesty and glory stampt upon it, and shining in it. Take a broken, drooping spirit, he hears the free offer of grace, the precious promises of God in Christ; but he casts by all promises; but when the Lord comes in, he speaks particularly to his heart, he meets with all his objections, that he thinks,—this is the Lord, and this is to me.

2. *She said unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master.* As she was ravished with his voice, so, impatient of delay, she takes his talk out of his mouth; and to his first and only word, she answered but one other, *Rabboni, which is to say, Master.* A wonder that in this verse but two words should pass betwixt them two; but some give this reason, that a sudden joy rousing all her passions, she could neither proceed in her own, nor give him leave to go forward in his speech.

3. For the consequents after this apparition, Jesus saith unto her, *Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and to your Father, and to my God and your God.*

Touch me not. Mary is not satisfied to see her Lord, nor is she satisfied to hear her Lord, but she must touch him, embrace his feet; but on a sudden he checks her forwardness; as if he had said, O Mary, fix not thy thoughts so much upon my present condition, inasmuch as this is not the highest pitch of my exaltation; I am not as yet attained to that, nor shall I attain to it until I ascend; the degrees of my exaltation are, 1. My resurrection. 2. My ascension. 3. My session at God's right hand; but that is not yet.

4. *But go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God:* this was the command of Christ; instead of touching him, she must go with a message to his apostles, and this was more beneficial both to her and them.

But what means he to speak of the ascension, when as yet we

are but upon the resurrection? I suppose this was to prevent their mistake, who might have thought, if Christ be risen, then we shall have his company again, as heretofore: No, saith Christ, I am not risen to make any abode with you; my rising is in reference to my ascending.

But whither will he ascend? *To his Father and our Father; to his God and our God.* O blessed message! This is the voice of a father to his son; *all that I have is thine.* Now if this Father be also God, and if all that is God's be also ours, what can we desire more? But here's the question, whether his Father and God, be also ours? That he is Christ's Father, and Christ's God, is without all question: but that his Father should be our Father, and that his God should be our God; this were a gospel indeed. O then what a gospel is this! 'Go unto my brethren, and say unto them, that our relations and interests are all one; the same Father that is mine, is their's; and the same God that is mine, is their's.'

Sect. VI.—*Of Christ's Apparition to his ten Disciples.*

On this day some reckon five apparitions; but I shall now only take notice of the last. *Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you; and when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his feet.* In these words we have the apparition of Christ, with all its circumstances.

As, 1. When he appeared.
2. Where he appeared.
3. To whom he appeared.
4. How he appeared.

So necessary was it to confirm this point, that not a needful circumstance must be wanting. And first is laid down the time; *Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week.*

1. It was the same day, that is, the very day of rising; the same day that he appeared to Peter, to the two disciples going to Emmaus, to the woman coming to the sepulchre, and to Mary Magdalen; the very same day he appears to the ten.

2. It was the same day at evening: both at morn, noon, and evening, Christ shewed himself alive by many infallible proofs. Early in the morning he appeared to Mary, and presently after to the three Marys, who touched his feet, and worshipped him. About noon he appeared to Simon Peter: in the afternoon he travelled with two of his disciples almost eight miles, to the castle of Emmaus; and in the evening of the same day, he returned invisible from Emmaus to Jerusalem. At all times of the day, Christ is prepared, and preparing grace for his people.

3. It was the same day at evening, *being the first of the week.* When Joseph shewed himself unto his brethren, he would not do it at first, and yet he dealt very kindly with them: but Christ's kindness is far above Joseph's; for on the first day of the week, the very same day that he rose from the dead, he appears unto them.

4. The place is laid down in this passage, *where the disciples were assembled.* The evangelist Luke speaks expressly, it was in Jerusalem; but in what house in Jerusalem, it is unknown; only some conjecture, that it was in the house of some disciple, wherein was an upper room; this upper room, according to the manner of their buildings at that time, was the most large and capacious of any other, and the most retired and free from disturbance. Christ came in when the doors were shut, either causing the doors to give place, the disciples not knowing how; or else altering the very substance of the doors, that his body might pass through them without destruction. I know not but he that thickens the waters to carry his body, might also attenuate the doors, to make way for his body.

5. The persons to whom he appeared, were his disciples; they that were shut up, not daring to step out of doors, for fear of the Jews. It is Christ's usual course to appear to them who are full of fears and griefs, and most in dangers: *When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.*

6. For the manner how he appeared: 1. *He stood in the midst.* 2. *He said, Peace be unto you.* 3. *He shewed them his hands and his side.*

(1.) *He stood in the midst.* O what comfort is here, to see Jesus Christ stand in the midst; now may the disciples behold him as their blessed peace-maker, their mediator, as one that hath slain the enmity; not only that enmity betwixt men and men, Jews and Gentiles, but also betwixt God and men. This he did by his death, and now he declares it at his resurrection; *having slain the enmity by his cross, he came and preached peace: Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said unto them, Peace be unto you.*

(2.) *He said, Peace be unto you.* A seasonable salutation; for now were the disciples in fear and trouble: they had no peace with God, or man, or with their own consciences; and therefore a more welcome news could not have come.

[1.] It speaks their peace with God. Sin was it that brought a difference betwixt God and man: now this difference Jesus Christ had taken away by his death: *Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.* This was the great design of Christ's coming, to make peace betwixt God and man; his Father imposed this office upon him, and Jesus Christ undertook it, and discharged it, and he proclaims it, in the first place, to his disciples, *Peace be unto you.*

[2.] It speaks their peace with man. I know no reason why we should exclude civil peace out of Christ's wish; many a promise and precept we have in the word, scattered here and there, to this purpose: *And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid.—Follow peace, and holiness, without which no man shall see God.* 'Orbem pacatem,' was ever a clause in the prayers of the primitive church, that the world might be quiet; I am sure it is Christ's command, *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.*

[3.] It speaks their peace among themselves, peace one with another; such is, or should be, the condition of the church. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is at unity within itself: the apostle dwells on this unity: *There is one body, and one spirit, and one hope, and one Lord, and one faith, and one baptism, and one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* The church is a court, whose very pillars are peace. The building, or Christianity, knows no other material to work upon. If we look upon the church itself, *there is one body:* if upon the very soul of it, *there is one spirit:* if upon the endowment of it, *there is one hope:* if upon the head of it, *there is one Lord:* if upon the life of it, *there is one faith:* if upon the door of it, *there is one baptism:* if upon the father of it, *there is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* It was sometimes Christ's command unto his apostles, *Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.* And as a blessed effect of this salutation, (for I look upon them as words full of virtue,) the apostles and churches of Christ kept a most sweet harmony: *the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul.*

[4.] It speaks peace within, peace of conscience. The apostles had exceedingly fallen from Christ; one betrayed him, and another denied him, all left him alone in the midst of his enemies; and yet to them he speaks, *Peace be unto you.* I know not a better ground for comfort of poor humbled sinners than this is: it may be you have dealt very unkindly with Jesus Christ, you have forsaken him, denied him, forsworn him; O but consider, all this hindered not Christ's apparition to his apostles; he comes unexpected, and quiets their spirits: he stays not till they had sued to him for mercy, but of his mere love he stills the waves, and calms their troubled spirits, working in them according to his word, *Peace be unto you.*

(3.) *He shewed unto them his hands and his side.* I look upon this as a true and real manifestation of his resurrection: Christ's body yet remaining on earth was not entered into that fulness of glory; and therefore he might then retain some scars or blemishes, to manifest the truth of his resurrection to his disciples. O the wonderful condescensions of Christ! what helps

doth he continually afford to beget in us faith! If we are ignorant, he instructs us; if we err, he reduceth us; if we sin, he corrects us; if we stand he holds us up; if we fall, he lifts us up again; if we go, he leads us; if we come to him, he is ready to receive us; there is not a passage of Christ between him and his, but is an argument of love, and a means either of begetting or increasing faith.

CHAP. II.

SECT. I.—*Of knowing Jesus as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation in his Resurrection.*

THAT in all respects we may look on Jesus,—1. Let us know Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation in his resurrection, and during the time of his abode upon the earth after his resurrection. This is worth the knowing: on it depends our justification, salvation; *for if Christ be not risen, we are yet in our sins, and our faith is in vain, and our hope is in vain.* O my soul, study this point; many take it up in gross, they can run over this article of their creed, "The third day he rose again from the dead;" but for a particular understanding of it, in respect of the time, or the end, or the manner, or the certainty, how many are to seek; I shall appeal to thyself; are not many discoveries already made, which before thou never tookest notice of? and if thou wouldst but study this point, how much more might yet appear! especially to thine own good; it is not enough to know Christ's resurrection, unless thou know it for thyself. Be sure thou hast this mind, that Christ rose again; but what is that to me? Saving knowledge is ever joined with a particular application; if Christ be my head, then he could not rise, but I rose with him, and in him: and thus, O my soul, look on Christ; and thus search into every particular of Christ's resurrection: come study when he rose; study the arguments that make out Christ's resurrection sure and certain; study all the apparitions of Jesus Christ; O what delightful studies are these! Hadst thou been with them to whom Christ appeared, would not thy heart have leaped with joy! Come, study it closely, for the benefits of these apparitions extend to thee. Know this for thyself.

SECT. II.—*Of considering Jesus in that respect.*

LET us consider Jesus carrying on this work of our salvation in his resurrection.

1. Consider the time when Christ rose again. As Christ had his three days, and no more; so must thou have the same three

days like unto his: the first day was called the day of preparation; the second was the sabbath-day; and the third day was the resurrection day: so thy first day is a day of preparation, a day of passion, wherein thou must strive against sin and Satan, wherein thou must suffer all their darts until thou diest; and thy second day is a day of rest, wherein thy body must lie in the grave, and thy flesh rest in hope; wherein thou shalt enter into peace, and rest in thy bed, until the trumpet sound, and bid thee arise, and come to judgment; and thy third day is a day of resurrection.

2. Consider the reasons why Christ arose; was it not to confound the Jews? They could not endure to hear of Christ's resurrection, and therefore when Peter and the other apostles spoke on that point, *they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them.* Again, was it not to confirm the faith of Christ's followers? Until he was risen, their faith was weak; but after he had shewed himself alive by many infallible proofs, they could then cry out, My Lord and my God! Again, was it not to evidence that he had fully satisfied all our debts? The apostle tells us, that Christ was our surety; at his death he was arrested, and cast into prison, whence he could not come till all was paid; and therefore to hear that Christ is risen, is a clear evidence that God is satisfied. Again, was it not to conquer sin, death, and the devil? Now he took from death his sting, and from hell its standard; now he seized upon the hand-writing that was against us, and nailed it to his cross; now he spoiled principalities and powers, and carried away the keys of death and hell; now he came out of the grave as a mighty conqueror, saying, as Deborah did in her song, *O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength, thou hast marched valiantly.* Again, was it not to become the first-fruits of them that slept? Christ was the first that rose again to die no more; and by virtue of his resurrection (as being the first-fruits) we must rise again: *As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive;—every man in his own order, Christ the first-fruits, and afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming.* Again, was it not that he might be declared to be the Son of God? Was it not that he might be exalted and glorified? This is the main reason of all; see thou to this! O give him the glory of his resurrection; so meditate, and consider on this transaction, as to ascribe to his name all honour and glory. What, is he risen from the dead? Hath God highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name? O then let every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

3. Consider the manner of Christ's resurrection. 1. He arose as a common person; in which respect his resurrection concerns us no less than himself. We must not think that when Christ was raised, it was no more than when Lazarus was raised; his

resurrection was the resurrection of us all; it was in the name of us all, and had in it a seed-like virtue, to work the resurrection of us all.—2. He rose by his own power; and so did none but Jesus Christ from the beginning of the world. O my soul, he was able to raise himself, much more is he able to raise thee up, 3. He rose with an earthquake: O the power of Christ! What ailed thee, O earth, to skip like a ram! *The Lord reigneth, and therefore the earth is moved.* O what a rocky heart is mine! How much harder than that rock that moves not, melts not, at the presence of God, the presence of the God of Jacob.

4. An angel ministered to him at his resurrection: *An angel came, and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.* Angels were the first ministers of the gospel, the first preachers of Christ's resurrection; they preached more of Christ than all the prophets did: they first told the women that Christ was risen; and they did the first service to Christ at his resurrection, in rolling the stone from the door's mouth. O my soul, that thou wert but like these blessed angels! How is it that they are so forward in God's service, and thou art so backward? One day thou expectest to be equal with the angels, and art thou now so far behind them?—Many of the bodies of the saints arose out of their graves at his resurrection; as the angels ministered, so the saints waited on him; look upon them as the fruit of Christ's resurrection, and as an earnest of thy own.—Christ rose again with a true and perfect body, with an incorruptible and powerful body, with a spiritual and agile body, with a glorious body, brighter than the sun in his utmost glory; *and he shall change our vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.* O consider of it, until thou feelest the influence, and comest to the assurance, of this blessed change.

1. Consider the several apparitions of Jesus Christ.

2. Muse on his apparition to Mary Magdalen: O the grief before he appeared! and, O the joys when he appeared!—1. Before, she apprehended nothing, but that some or other had taken away her Lord: these were all the words she uttered; *They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.*—2. After he appeared, she was filled with joy: when nothing else would satisfy, Jesus himself appears. At first he is unknown, she takes him for the gardener; but within a while he utters a voice that opens both her ears and eyes: *And Jesus saith unto her, Mary.* It was the sweetest sound that ever she heard; hereby the cloud is scattered, and the Sun of righteousness appears; this one word lightens her eyes, and cheers her heart.

I know not in all the book of God a soul more depressed with sorrow, and lifted up with joy: O meditate on this! if Christ be absent, all is night; but if Christ appear, he turns all again into lightsome day.

3. Muse on his apparition to the ten disciples. *When the doors were shut for fear of the Jews, then came Jesus, and stood in the midst, saying to them, Peace be unto you.* Before his apparitions, sorrow and fear had possessed all their spirits; sometimes they walked abroad, and were sad; and sometimes they kept within, and shut the doors upon them, as being exceedingly afraid: in this condition Jesus Christ (that knows best the times and seasons of grace and comfort) comes and stands in the midst of their assembly; he comes in, they know not how; and no sooner is he in, but he salutes them, *Peace be unto you.*

This was the prime of all his wishes; no sooner is he risen, but he wisheth peace to all his apostles; no sooner meets he with them, but the very opening of his lips was with these words: they are the first words, at the first meeting, on the very first day. A sure sign that peace was in the heart of Jesus Christ; howsoever it is with us, peace or war, there is the commonweal where Christ is King, and there is nothing but peace. Come, examine: art thou, O my soul, a member of this body? a subject of this commonweal? Hath the influence of Christ's peace (wrought and declared at his resurrection) any force on thee? hast thou peace with God—and peace within—and peace without? Dost thou feel that ointment poured upon Aaron's head, and running down the skirts of his garments? Doth the spirit assure thee, that Christ the Prince of peace hath made peace and reconciliation betwixt God and thee? *O how beautiful upon the mountains would the feet of him be, that should publish peace, that should bring these good tidings, that thou art a citizen of that Jerusalem where God is King, and Christ the Prince of peace! where all the buildings are compact together, as a city that is at unity within itself.*

Sect. III.—*Of desiring Jesus in that respect.*

Let us desire Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation in his resurrection.

But what is there in Christ's resurrection, that should move our souls to desire it?

I answer, 1. Something in itself. 2. Something in reference to us.

1. There is something in itself. Had we but a view of the glory, dignity, and excellency of Christ, as raised from the dead, it would put us on this heavenly motion; we should *fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat.* The more excellent and glorious any good is, the more eager should our desires be: now Christ raised from the dead is an excellent object; the resurrection of Christ is the glorifying of Christ; yea, his glorifying took its beginning at his blessed resurrection; now it was that *God highly exalted him, and gave him a name above every name.*

2. There is something in reference unto us; as, 1. He rose again for our justification. I must needs grant, that Christ's death, and not his resurrection, is the meritorious cause of our justification; but on the other side, Christ's resurrection, and not his death, is for the applying of our justification: as the stamp adds no virtue, nor matter of real value, to a piece of gold, but only it makes that value, which before it had, actually applicable and current unto us; so the resurrection of Christ was no part of the price or satisfaction which Christ made to God, yet is it that which applies all his merits, and makes them of force unto his members. *If Christ be not risen again, ye are yet in your sins, and your faith is in vain.* Remission of sin (which is a part of our justification) though purchased by Christ's death, yet could not be applied to us, or be made ours, without Christ's resurrection; and in this respect, O how desirable it is!

3. He rose again for our sanctification. So the apostle, *He hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together with Christ.* If you would know how you that were blind in heart, uncircumcised in spirit, utterly unacquainted with the life of God, are now light in the Lord, affecting heavenly things, walking in righteousness; it comes from this blessed resurrection of Jesus Christ: *we are quickened with Christ,* it is Christ's resurrection that raised our souls. Whence *reckon yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.* This is the end of Christ's resurrection, that we should be new creatures, of new lives, new principles, new conversations; he rose again for our sanctification.

4. He rose again for our resurrection to eternal life: Christ is the pattern, and pledge, and cause of the resurrection of our bodies; *for since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.* There is a virtue flowing from Christ to his saints, by which they shall be raised up at the latter day: not but that all the wicked shall be raised again by the power of Christ, as he is a Judge; for *all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and they shall come forth;* yet with this difference, *they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.*

5. He rose again for the assurance of our justification, sanctification, and salvation. This is the reason why the apostle useth these words to prove the resurrection of Christ, *I will give you the sure mercies of David:* none of God's mercies had been sure to us, if Christ had not risen again from the dead. But now all is made sure; his work of redemption being fully finished, the mercy which thereupon depended, was now made certain, (and as the apostle speaks) *sure unto all the seed.*

Methinks a thought of this object, in respect of itself, and in respect of us, should put our souls into a longing frame. Is it not a desirable thing to see the King in his beauty? If Christ incarnate

was the desire of nations, how much more is Christ in glory! If it was Augustin's great wish to have seen Christ in the flesh, how should we wish to see Christ risen from the dead? In this consideration we cannot fathom the thousand thousandth part of the worth and excellency of Jesus Christ. Or if Christ's resurrection in itself will not stir up our desires, is it not desirable in reference unto us? What, that he should rise again for our justification! That by virtue of his resurrection, thy soul should appear righteous before the judgment-seat of God! O my soul, that thy portion may be with theirs who have right and title to this blessed resurrection of Jesus Christ! O that thou wert on the wing in thy desires after Christ! O that feelingly thou knewest him, and the power of his resurrection! that thou wert resolved to give no sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eye-lids, until thou couldst say, Christ's resurrection is mine!

Sect. IV.—*Of hoping in Jesus in that respect.*

Let us hope in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in his resurrection. We may examine the firmness of our hope in Christ's resurrection by these signs:

1. If Christ's resurrection be mine, then is Christ's death mine; the fruits or effects of Christ's death and resurrection cannot be severed; *If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.*

2. If Christ's resurrection be mine, then is Christ's spirit mine, yea, then I am quickened by the Spirit of Christ. *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his:—But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, then he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies,* (and I may add, your immortal souls,) *by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* Christ's Spirit (if Christ's resurrection be ours) will have the same effect in our souls, that it had in his body; as it raised up the one, so it will raise up the other; as it quickened the one, so it will quicken the other: but how shall we know whether we have received this quickening Spirit? Many pretend to the Spirit, but how may we be assured that the Spirit is ours? I answer,

(1.) The Spirit is a Spirit of illumination; here is the beginning of his work, he begins in light; as in the first creation, the first-born of God's works was light. *And God said, Let there be light, and there was light;* so in this new creation, the first work is light; *God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts; to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.* There is a light in the mind, and a light in the heart, of those who have the Spirit of Christ; not only to know the truth, but to love it, believe it, embrace it. Consider whether any of this new light of Jesus

Christ hath shined into thy heart; take heed, deceive not thyself, thou mayest have a great deal of wit and knowledge, and yet go to hell; this light is a light shining into thy heart; this light is a Christ-discovering light; this light is a sin-discovering light; this light will cause thee to find thy hypocrisy, deadness, dulness in spiritual duties; if thou hast not this light, thou art near to eternal burnings: darkness is one of the properties of hell, and without this light, inward darkness will lead to utter darkness, where is *weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.*

(2.) Thy quickening spirit is a spirit of sanctification; such was the Spirit whereby Christ was raised. *He was declared mightily to be the Son of God, according to the Spirit of sanctification, by the resurrection from the dead.* That Spirit which raised up Jesus Christ, was the same Spirit which sanctified his human nature: and such is that quickening Spirit to all in whom it dwelleth; it is a Spirit of holiness, and it works holiness, changing the heart, and turning the bent of it from sin to holiness. *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.* O my soul, try thyself by this sign; dost thou find such an inward change wrought in thy soul? Dost thou find the law of God a law of holiness written on thy heart? Dost thou find a law within thee contrary to the law of sin, commanding with authority that which is holy and good? If so, surely this is no other *but the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus;* or the law of this quickening Spirit, communicated from Christ unto the soul.

(3.) If Christ's resurrection be mine, then am I planted together in the likeness of Christ's resurrection; then I am made conformable to Christ in his resurrection: now if we would know wherein that resemblance is, the apostle tells us, *That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.* Our mortification is a resemblance of Christ's death, and our vivification is a resemblance of Christ's resurrection. In this ground of our hope concerning our interest in the resurrection of Christ, I shall propound these questions:

1. Whether our souls are vivified?
2. Whether we grow in our vivification?

For the first, the truth of our vivification will appear by these rules:

(1.) True vivification is general, both in respect of us, and in respect of grace.

In respect of us, it is diffused throughout the whole man: *The very God of peace sanctify you wholly*, saith the apostle. And, in respect of grace, it is in every grace. Indeed, some Christians are eminent in some graces; and some in others; some have more love, and some knowledge, and some more patience, and some more self-denial: but all that are true Christians have each

of these graces in some measure: if vivification be true, there is a whole work of grace both in heart and life; as the light in the air runs through the whole hemisphere, so does grace run through the whole man.

(2.) True vivification is a new life acting upon a new principle of faith. *The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God.* Paul's life is a spiritual life, and the spring of his life is the Son of God. Jesus Christ is essentially, fundamentally life itself; and by his incarnation, passion, resurrection, he is life for his saints; they live by him, and in him, and for him, and through him; he is the heart of their spiritual life. O my soul, dost thou live this life of faith on the Son of God? canst thou make use of Christ in every condition? dost thou look up to Jesus, and desirest no more good name, repute, or honour, than Christ will afford thee? or, in case of death, dost thou, like Stephen, resign thy soul to Christ? dost thou see death conquered in the resurrection of Christ? dost thou look beyond death? dost thou over-eye all things betwixt thee and glory? O the sweet of this life of faith on the Son of God! If thou knowest what this means, then mayest thou assure thyself of thy vivification.

(3.) True vivification is a new life acting upon a new principle of hope of glory. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.* By Christ's resurrection we have a lively hope of our resurrection unto glory: is not Christ our head? and if he be risen to glory, shall not his members follow after him? Certainly there is but one life, one Spirit, one glory of Christ and his members: *The glory which thou gavest me, I have given unto them,* said Christ. The soul that is vivified, hath a lively hope of glory on several grounds. As, 1. Because of the promises of glory set down in the word; now on these promises hope fastens her anchor; if Christ hath promised, how should I but maintain a lively hope? 2. Because of the first-fruits of the Spirit; there are sometimes foretastes of the glory, drops of heaven poured into a soul; whence it comfortably concludes,—if I have the earnest and first-fruits, surely in his time Jesus Christ will give the harvest. 3. Because of Christ's resurrection unto glory: now he arose as a common person, and he went up into heaven as a common person; whence hope is lively, saying, Why should I doubt, seeing I am quickened together with Christ, and raised up together with Christ, and am made to sit together with Christ in heavenly places? Try, O my soul, by this sign: art thou lively in the hope of glory? doth thy heart leap within at the thought of thy inheritance in heaven? In a lively fountain the waters will leap

and sparkle; so if thy hope be lively, thou wilt have living joys, living speeches, living delights: amidst all thy afflictions thou wilt say, These will not endure for ever; I myself shall away ere long, glory will come at last. O the sweet of this life of hope! If thou feelest these stirrings, it is an argument of thy vivification.

(4.) True vivification acts all its duties upon a new principle of love to Christ; men not enlivened by Jesus Christ may do much, and go far in outward service, yea, they may come to suffering; and yet without love to Christ, all is lost, all comes to nothing. *Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels,—though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge,—though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burnt, and have not love,—it profiteth me nothing.* But how may we know that all our actings are out of love to Jesus Christ? I answer,

1. If we act by the rule of Christ. *If ye love me, keep my commandments.—He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.—If any man love me, he will keep my commandments.* He that loves Christ, will look upon every act, every service, every performance, whether it be according to the rule of Christ, and then on he goes with it.

2. If we act to the honour of Christ. We may pray, and hear, and preach, and act for ourselves, more than for the honour of Jesus Christ: while Christ shewed miracles, and fed his followers to the full, they cried up Jesus, and none like Jesus; but when he pressed sincerity upon them, and preparation for sufferings, *from that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.* It is no news for men to fall off when their ends fail; only they that love Christ, look not at these outward things: and hence it is that in all their actings, they will carry on the design of the Father, in advancing the honour of the Son, whatever it cost them. O my soul, apply this to thyself; if thou livest the life of love, if in all thy actings, duties, services, thou art carried on with a principle of love to Jesus Christ, it is a sure sign of thy vivification.

For the second question, Whether we grow in our vivification? We may discover it thus:

1. We grow, when we are led on to the exercise of new graces; this the apostle calls adding one grace unto another: *Add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity.* At first a Christian doth not exercise all graces; though all graces be planted in him, yet the exercise of them is not all at once: but, as wicked men are led on from one sin unto another, and so grow worse and worse; so good men are led from one grace to another; and so increase,

tribulation working patience, and patience experience, and experience hope.

2. We grow when we find new degrees of the same grace; as, when love grows more fervent, when knowledge abounds, and hath a larger apprehension of spiritual things, when faith goes on to plerophory, or full assurance of faith. When godly sorrow proceeds from mourning for sin, as contrary to God's holiness, to mourn for it, as contrary to him who loves us; when obedience enlargeth its bounds, and we abound more and more in the work of the Lord. *I know thy works*, said Christ to the church of Thiatyra? *I know thy works, and the last to be more than the first.*

3. We grow, when the fruits and duties we perform grow more ripe, more spiritual, and more to the honour of Christ: it may be we pray not more nor longer than sometimes we used; it may be our prayers have not more wit, or memory, than sometimes they had; yet they are more savoury, more spiritual, and more to Christ's honour, than sometimes they were. Now we must know, that one short prayer, put up in faith, with a broken heart, and aiming at the honour of Christ, argues more growth in grace, than prayers of a day long, and never so eloquent, without the like qualifications. In every duty we should look at their ends and aims; for if we debase ourselves, in the sense of our own vileness, and emptiness, and inability, and if we aim at God's honour, and praise, and glory, it is a good sign of growth: we call this the spiritual part of duty, when it is from God, and through God, and to God.

4. We grow, when we are more rooted in Christ: so the apostle describes it, *a growing up unto him in all things.* Growth of grace, is usually expressed by the growing into Christ: *grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* As if to grow in grace without him, were nothing, as indeed it is not. Philosophers, moral men, and others, may grow in virtues, but not in Christ. Come then, search and try whether we are more rooted in Christ: when a young plant is new set, the roots are a small depth in the earth, one may pull them up with his hands; but as the tree shooteth up in height, so it strikes the root deeper and deeper: so it is with us; we have not so firm and near a conjunction with Christ, at our first union; but the more we live with him, like good trees, bringing forth the fruits of righteousness, the more we strike root downwards.

O my soul, try the growth of vivification by these few signs: Art thou led on to the exercises of new graces, adding grace to grace? dost thou find new degrees of the same grace? is thy love more hot, thy faith more firm? all thy boughs more laden and filled with the fruits of righteousness? are all thy duties more spiritual? are thy ends more raised to aim at God, to sanctify

him, and to debase thyself? art thou more rooted in Christ? in all thy duties, graces, and gracious actings, hast thou learnt habitually to say, I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me? dost thou interest Christ more and more in all thou dost? dost thou know and affect Christ more and more? Come, search, try: it may be little winds have formerly shaken thee; but thy root is struck lower into Christ; and now thou art not so soon shaken with every wind; surely thy hope is well grounded, thou hast a part in Christ's resurrection.

Sect. V.—*Of Believing in Jesus in that respect.*

Let us believe in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in his resurrection.

Scrupulous souls! throw not away your confidence; ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? Was not satisfaction and justification, payment of debt, and discharge of bonds, required of him, and of necessity, for us! O believe! and that I may persuade to purpose, I shall lay down, as before; 1. Some directions; and, 2. Some encouragements of faith.

1. For directions of faith, in reference to Christ's resurrection, remember

(1.) Faith must directly go to Christ.

(2.) Faith must go to Christ, as God in the flesh.

(3.) Faith must go to Christ, as God in the flesh, made under the law.

(4.) Faith must go to Christ, not only as made under the directive part of the law by his life, but under the penal part by his death.

(5.) Faith must go to Christ as God in the flesh, made under the directive and penal part of the law, and as quickened by the Spirit. *He was put to death in the flesh,* saith Peter, *and quickened by the Spirit.* And accordingly must be the method and order of our faith. After we have looked on Christ as dead in the flesh, we must go on to see him as quickened by the Spirit: *If Christ was not raised, or quickened,* saith the apostle, *your faith were in vain;* as if he had said, To believe in Christ as only in respect of his birth, life, death, and to go no farther, were but a vain faith; therefore all the sermons of the apostles represented Christ, not only as crucified, but as raised. This was the way of the apostles' preaching; they told a history (I speak it with reverence) of one Jesus Christ, that was the Word of God, and that was become man, and how he was crucified at Jerusalem, and how he was raised from the dead; and all this in a plain, simple, spiritual manner: and while they were telling those blessed truths, the Spirit fell upon the people, and they had faith wrought in them. Faith is not wrought so much in the way

of ratiocination, as by the Spirit of God coming upon the souls of the people, by the relation or representation of Jesus Christ to the soul. And this our Lord himself hints: *As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* Come then, set we before us Christ raised; and in that respect, we must look up to Jesus.

(6.) Faith in going to Christ, as raised from the dead, is principally and mainly to look to the end of Christ in his resurrection; the very devils may believe the history of Christ's resurrection, *they believe and tremble;* but the people of God are to look at the meaning of Christ, why he rose from the dead. 1. The supreme end was God's glory, and that was the meaning of Christ's prayer, *Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee;* with which agrees the apostle, *He rose again from the dead, to the glory of the Father.* 2. The subordinate ends were many: as, 1. That he might tread on the serpent's head. 2. That he might destroy the works of the devil. 3. That he might be the first-fruits of them that sleep. 4. That he might assure our faith, that he is able to keep that which we have committed to him against that day. 5. That he might be justified in the Spirit; as he was begotten in the womb by the Spirit; led up and down in the Spirit, offered up by the eternal Spirit, so he was raised from the dead by the Spirit, and justified in his spirit at his resurrection. Christ was under the greatest attainder that ever man was, he stood publicly charged with the guilt of a world of sins; and therefore he was raised up from the power of death, that he might be declared a righteous person. 6. That he might justify us: *As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all for condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came on all men unto justification.*

(7.) That he might beget us anew by his resurrection: *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again—by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.* And this he doth two ways: 1. As our pattern; *Like as Christ was raised from the dead,—even so we also should walk in newness of life: and likewise reckon ye yourselves to be alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* 2. As the efficient cause thereof: *For when we were dead in sin, he hath quickened us together with Christ; and ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.* O the power of Christ's resurrection! If we saw a man raised from the dead, how should we admire at such a wondrous power; but the raising of one dead soul, is a greater work, than to raise a church-yard of dead bodies.

(8.) That he might sanctify us, which immediately follows the other: *But yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive*

from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. In our regeneration we are risen with Christ, it is the apostle's argument: *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above;—set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth.* As the death of Christ hath a special influence upon our mortification, so the resurrection of Christ hath a special influence on our vivification: *He hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together with Christ.*

But how should I manage my faith, to draw down the virtue of Christ's resurrection for my vivification? I answer:—

Go to the well-head; look into the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This one act contains in it these particulars; As, 1. That I must go out of myself, to something else; this is that check that lies upon that work of grace, to keep out pride, that faith sees the whole good of the soul in a principle extraneous, even the springs of Jesus. 2. That I must attribute wholly, freely, joyfully, all that I am, to Jesus Christ, and to the effectual working of his grace. *By the grace of God I am what I am; and I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.* The life of grace springs only from the life and resurrection of Jesus Christ; and therefore, as I must deny myself, so I must attribute all to him from what it comes. 3. I must lie at his feet with an humble dependance upon him, and him alone, for the supplies of grace; this was the apostle's practice: *O that I may be found in him! O that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection! O that by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead!* Christ is the fountain of life; faith is the means of life; the power and original of life is entirely reserved to Jesus Christ; but faith is the band on our part, whereby we are tied unto Christ, and live in Christ; and thus saith Christ himself, *I am the resurrection and the life.* Is that all? No, *He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.* And, *I am the bread of life.* Is that all? No; *He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst.*

Therefore pray for an increase of faith; complain to Christ, tell him that thou canst not believe as thou wouldest, thou canst not get in so much of Christ into thy soul as thou desirest.

And act thy faith vigorously on Christ's resurrection, for a farther degree of quickening. Christ is an overflowing fountain, and he would have believers to partake abundantly of what is in him; he cannot abide that any should content themselves with a present stock of grace: Christ is not as a stream that fails, or as a channel that runs dry; no, Christ is the fountain of life, he is the chief ordinance of life that ever God set up. I know there are other means of Christ's appointment; but if thou wilt live at the spring, drink in there, yea, drink abundantly, according to the overflowing of this fountain.

Thus for directions: now for the encouragements of our faith, to believe in Christ's resurrection.

1. Consider of the virtue and influence of this object, into all that golden chain of privileges; *If Christ be not raised, you are yet in your sins;—then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.* From the resurrection of Christ flow all those privileges, even from justification to salvation. The first is clear, and therefore all the rest.

2. Consider that Christ's resurrection, and the effects of it, are nothing unto us, if we do not believe. It is faith that brings down the particular sweetness and comforts of Christ's resurrection unto our souls: it is faith that puts us in the actual possession of Christ's resurrection; whatsoever Christ is to us before faith, yet really we have no benefit by it, until we believe it: it is faith that takes hold of all that Christ have done for us, and gives us the actual enjoyment of it; O let not the work stick in us! What! is Christ risen from the dead? and shall we not eye Christ, and take him home to ourselves by faith? The apostle tells us, *that he that believeth not, hath made God a liar, because he believeth not the record that God hath given of his Son.* Unbelief belies God in all that he hath done for us. O take heed of this; without faith, what are we better for Christ's resurrection?

3. Or, if we are dazzled, hear his voice, *Fear not, I am the first and last; I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen.* As if he had said; Come, cast your souls on me; it is I that have conquered sin, death, and hell, for you. It is I that have broke the serpent's head, that have taken away the sting of death, that have cancelled the bond of the hand-writing against you, that have in my hands a general acquittance of your sins. Come, take it, take me, and take all with me; only believe in him who is risen again for your justification.

Sect. VI.—*Of loving Jesus in that respect.*

Let us love Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation:

1. In his apparition to Mary, Jesus saith unto her, *Woman why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?* Were not these kind words from Jesus Christ? How often hath thy heart sighed out complaints, O where is he whom my soul loveth? *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him I am sick of love.* And then, was not Christ seen in the mount? was not thy extremity his opportunity? did he not bespeak thy comforts with these words, *Why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?* What wouldest thou have, that I can give thee? And what dost thou want, that I can give thee? If any thing in

heaven or earth will make thee happy, it is all thy own; wouldest thou have pardon? thou shalt have it, I freely forgive thee all the debt: wouldest thou have myself? Behold I am thine, thy friend, thy Lord, thy husband, thy head, thy God. Were not these thy Lord's reviving words? Were not these healing, quickening passages of Christ's love.

2. In his apparition to the ten. *Jesus stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.* Lo here more words of love; in the midst of their trouble Christ stands in the midst, speaking peace to their souls; and hath not Christ done the like to thee? Hast thou not many and many a time been in troubles, that thou knowest not which way to turn thee? And even then, hath not Christ come to thy spirit with an olive branch of peace? hath he not wrought wonders in the sea of thy restless thoughts? hath he not made a calm? and more than so, hath he not filled thee with joy and peace in believing? hath he not sent thee away from thy prayers and complaints, with a piece of heaven in thy soul?

I might thus go on to consider other passages, in other apparitions; but are not these enough to draw thy love? O what love was this! O what humility was this! that Christ after his resurrection should converse with men forty days! worthy he was, after so many sorrows, sufferings, reproaches, after so cruel, ignominious, and bitter a death, immediately to have gone to glory. And for the confirmation of his disciples' faith, he might have commanded the angels to have preached his resurrection; no, he himself would stay in person, he himself would make it out by many infallible proofs; he himself would by his own example learn us a lesson of love, of meekness, and patience, in waiting after suffering for the reward.

Methinks a few of these passages should set all our hearts on a flame of love; if Christ be risen, set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth. O if the love of Christ were in us, it would make us wholly to despise this world; it would make us to forget it, as worldly love makes a man forget God; nay, it would be so strong and ardent, that we should not be able freely to think on any thing else but Jesus Christ; we should not then fear contempt, or care for disgrace, we should not fear death, or the grave, or hell, or devils, but we should sing in triumph, *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?—Thanks be to God, which gave us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Sect. VII.—*Of Joying in Jesus in that respect.*

Let us joy in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in his resurrection. This is the great gospel duty; we should rejoice in the Lord, yea, rejoice evermore. A Christian

estate should be a joyful and comfortable estate, and have such cause of joy as the children of Zion: *Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Jerusalem; be glad and rejoice with all thy heart, O daughter of Jerusalem.* A thousand reasons might be rendered; but here is one, *Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that sleep.* A commemoration of Christ's resurrection hath ever been a means of rejoicing in God.

What can be the condition of thy soul, wherein thou mayest not draw sweet from Christ's resurrection?

1. Is thy conscience in trouble for sin? The apostle tells thee, *The answer of a good conscience towards God, is by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*

2. Art thou afraid of condemnation? The apostle tells thee, *He was delivered for our offences, and he was raised again for our justification.*

3. Dost thou question thy regeneration? The apostle tells thee, *He hath begotten us again by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*

4. Art thou distressed, persecuted, troubled on every side? The apostle tells thee wherein now consists thy confidence, comfort, courage; to wit, in the life of Christ, in the resurrection of Christ. *We always bear about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus might also be made manifest in our body; for we which live, are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.*

5. Art thou afraid of death, hell, and the power of the grave? Why, now remember that Christ is risen from the dead, and by his glorious resurrection, death is swallowed up in victory. Job was so transported with this, that he eminently breaks out, *O that my words were now written, O that they were printed in a book! that they were graven with an iron pen and lead, in the rock, for ever! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me.* No man ever since Christ did speak more plainly of Christ's resurrection and his own, than Job did here. Observe in it, O my soul, Job's wish, and the matter wished; his wish was, that certain words which had been cordial to him, might remain to memory. 1. That they might be written. 2. That they might be registered in a book; enrolled upon records, as public instruments. 3. That they might be engraven in stone, and in the hardest stone, the rock; records might last long, yet time might injure them, and these words he would have last for ever. Moses and Job are said to have lived at one time; now Moses writ the law in stone, and considering that these words were gospel,

there was no reason that the law should be in tables of stone, and the gospel on sheets of paper; no, it were fit that this should be as firm and durable as that: *O that my words were now written, O that they were printed in a book.*

The matter wished, or the words he would have written, are these; *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that I shall live again.* Here is, first, his Redeemer rising. 2. His own rising, and his seeing God. This was the matter of his joy, his Redeemer must rise again; and he must rise too, and see his Redeemer. As Christ said of Abraham, *Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad.* So it appears of his servant Job, he saw Christ's day, both his first day and his latter day, and he rejoiced and was glad.

Away, all doubtful thoughts; consider what joys were of old, at the foresight of Christ's resurrection; but, especially, what joy was all the world over, when he rose again from the dead: then came the angels from heaven, and appeared in white; the disciples were exceeding glad when they saw the Lord; all the primitive saints rejoiced at this news, and, because of it, loved the very day on which Christ arose. Certainly the Lord's day was in high esteem with the ancient church; and the principal motive was, because of Christ's resurrection from the dead. O that on these days we could rejoice in the Lord, and again rejoice! O spend more of this day in spiritual rejoicing, especially in commemoration of Christ's resurrection, (yea, and of the whole work of redemption,) or else you will not answer the institution of our Lord.

Sect. VIII.—*Of calling on Jesus in that respect.*

Let us call on Jesus:

1. Let us pray that Christ's resurrection may be ours, and that we may be more and more assured of it. Let us say with the apostle, *O that I may know him and the power of his resurrection.* O that the Spirit of holiness, which quickened Christ from the dead, would by the same glorious power beget holiness, and faith, and love, and all other graces, in my poor soul. O that Christ would, by his resurrection, apply his active and passive obedience to me; O that he would be to me the Lord of the living, and the Prince of life; that he would overcome in me the death of sin, and that he would regenerate, quicken, renew, and fashion me, by the power of godliness, to become like himself!

2. Let us praise God for Christ's resurrection, and for all the privileges flowing from it into our souls. Christ is risen; by his resurrection he hath justified, sanctified, quickened, saved our souls; and therefore, *(blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,)* surely God requires a thousand hallelujahs,

and that we should bless him upon a thousand-stringed instrument. Here is fuel enough; the Lord kindle a great fire in every one of our hearts, to burn out all our lusts, and to inflame all our hearts with a love to Jesus Christ! Can we ever too much praise him for all his actings in our behalf? Are not all God's creatures called upon to rejoice with us, and to bless God for his redeeming of us? *Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it; shout, ye lower parts of the earth; break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein, for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.* This is the duty we shall do in heaven, and I believe we are never more in heaven (whilst on earth) than when we are in this exercise of praising God, and blessing God for Jesus Christ.

Sect. IX.—*Of Conforming to Jesus in that respect.*

Let us conform to Jesus in respect of his resurrection.

In this particular, I shall examine these queries: 1. Wherein we must conform? 2. How this conformity is wrought? 3. What are the means of this comformity?

For the first, Wherein we must conform? I answer in a word, In vivification. Christ's resurrection was to newness of life; it was a new life, a life different from that which he lived before: and so is our vivification a new life; it is a life from a new principle, of a new income, and of a new kind.

1. It is a life from a new principle: before vivification our principle was the flesh; but now we have a new principle, the Spirit of God; even as the soul dwells in the body, so doth the Holy Ghost dwell in the soul of a regenerate person, animating, and actuating, and enlivening it.

2. It is a life of a new income; I mean of grace, power, and light. Before vivification there was no such income: a man before his conversion might hear, pray, and do all duties; but, alas! he feels no power, no communication, with Christ. But after this, thou wilt, in the use of ordinances, frequently feel the saving incomes of God. In prayer thou wilt feel the Spirit carrying thy soul above itself: in hearing the word, thou wilt see the windows of heaven set open, and all manner of spiritual comforts showered down upon thee. In meditation of the promises, or of divine love, thou wilt find quickenings, encouragings, filling thy heart with gladness, and thy mouth with praises and songs of rejoicing. O what fountains of life are the promises to a living man! What food! what strength! what life! is a thought of Christ, of heaven, and of God's love? Whereas all these glorious things of the gospel are, to the natural man, but as a withered flower, a sealed book, a dry and empty cistern; he hath no use of them.

3. It is a life of another kind. Before vivification, we were

dead in sin whilst alive: but after vivification we live a spiritual life, a heavenly life, an immortal life. *If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness:* the body indeed is subject to corporal death through the remainders of sin; but the spirit is life here, and shall be hereafter, even for ever. I shall answer only to the vivification usually wrought: First, in the understanding. Secondly, in the will.

First, the understanding lets in the truth of what the gospel hath recorded; and thence inferreth as to a man's own self, that by the assistance of the Spirit of holiness, who raised up Jesus from the dead, it is possible for him to attain this life.

Then it has yet some brighter believing beams; it confidently closeth with this truth, that it is the will of the Lord that he should come, and live, and believe, and lay hold on Christ; that God doth particularly call, and bid him come to Christ, the fountain of life.

2. And now the answer to this call is wrought in the will.

(1.) The will summons all its confidences, and calls them off from every other bottom, to bestow them wholly upon Christ; and this consists in our voluntarily renouncing all other helps, excepting Jesus Christ alone; now it renounceth its own righteousness; it calls home dependence from every other object.

(2.) Hereupon there is a willing and cheerful receiving of Christ, and resignation of ourselves to his actual disposal, to quicken us, and save us in his own way.

(3.) Upon this follows the soul's confidence, and dependence upon Jesus Christ for life and for salvation; a clear beholding of God in Christ, and Christ in the promises, doth present such variety and fulness of arguments, to bear up hope and affiance, that the heart is resolved, and so resolved that we commit ourselves, and give our souls in charge, to Christ: *I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day.*

That union which thereby comes to be enjoyed with Christ, is such a union as is fruitful in begetting a quickening power in the heart. Justification and sanctification are twins of a birth; and hence it is, that vivification (which is one part of sanctification) is wrought in the soul after the self-same manner. First, the understanding is enlightened. 2. The will is changed. 3. All the affections are renewed. 4. The internals being quickened, there ensueth the renewing of the outward actions, life, and conversation. And immediately upon this, joy is made in heaven by the angels, God himself applauded it: *for this my son was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.*

For the third question; What are the means of this conformity, or vivification, on our parts?

1. Wait upon God in the ministry of the word; this is a means

whereby Christ ordinarily effecteth this vivification: and by this means it is that dead souls are quickened; the ministry of the word is the trumpet of Jesus Christ; when that sounds, who knows but he may quicken the dead! Hearken therefore to this word of God.

2. Exercise faith upon the Lord Jesus, as to justification. As is the clearness of our souls in bottoming ourselves on Christ for righteousness, so will be our quickness, and successful progress, in the work of holiness.

3. Trace every ordinance and every duty for the appearings of the Son of God. Be much in prayer, hearing, reading, fellowship with saints, the sacraments; be much in secret conversings with God, in meditation, inquiries, searchings; and (which is a precious work) be much in diligent watching of, and hearkening to, the movings, workings, intimations, of the Spirit of God; be much in observing the methods and interpreting the meanings and language of God in all his secret dispensations with the soul. Certainly there will be abundance of the life of God conveyed to him that walks in these paths. O for a spirit of prayer and meditation; O for a spirit swallowed up in communion with God! *Thou meetest him that worketh righteousness, and those that remember thee in thy ways.*

4. Look much at Christ raised, Christ glorified; Christ's resurrection was the beginning of his glory; and therein is comprehended both the glory that draws desires towards Christ, and the grace and power that establisheth faith in its dependence. Could we keep our hearts in a more constant view and believing meditation of the glory of Christ, our faces would certainly bring some beams of divinity with them from the mount; the very beholding of Christ hath a mighty virtue to leave the impressions of glory upon our spirits.

5. See our own personal vivification bottomed upon the resurrection of Christ; when we can by faith get a sight of this, it is not to speak how courageously and successfully the soul will grapple in the controversies of the Lord against the devil and our own deceitful hearts: O that I could act my faith more frequently on Christ's resurrection, so that at last I could see it by the light of God to be a principle of my vivification in particular! What a blessed means would this be!

6. Walk, as we have Christ Jesus for an example. This example of Christ yields much to our vivification; who can deny, but that acting with the pattern ever in one's eye, is very advantageous? Come then, and if we would live the life of God, let us live as Christ lived after his resurrection.

LOOKING UNTO JESUS,

IN HIS ASCENSION, SESSION, AND MISSION OF HIS SPIRIT.

BOOK VII.

CHAP. I.

SECT. I.—*Of Christ's Ascension.*

THUS far we have traced Jesus in his actings for us, *until the day in which he was taken up.* That which immediately follows, is his ascension, session at God's right hand, and mission of his holy Spirit; in prosecution of which, as in the former, I shall first lay down the object; and secondly, direct you how to look upon it.

The object threefold. 1. He ascended into heaven. 2. He sat down at God's right hand. 3. He sent down the Holy Ghost.

1. For the ascension of Christ; this was a glorious design, and contains in it a great part of the salvation of our souls. In prosecution of this, I shall shew:—1. That he ascended. 2. How he ascended. 3. Whither he ascended. 4. Why he ascended.

(1.) That he ascended. [1.] The prophets foresaw it: *I saw in the night, visions; and behold one, like the Son of man, came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him; and there was given him dominion, glory, and a kingdom.* [2.] The evangelists relate it: *He was received up into heaven,—He was carried up into heaven.* [3.] The eleven witness it: *For while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight.* [4.] The holy angels speak it: *For while they looked stedfastly towards heaven, as he went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel, which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*

(2.) How he ascended. [1.] He ascended blessing his apostles: *While he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.* It is some comfort to Christ's ministers, that though the world hate them, Christ doth bless them; yea, he parted with them in a way of blessing: as Jacob, leaving the world, blessed his sons; so Christ, leaving the world, blessed his

apostles, and all the faithful ministers of Christ unto the end of the world.

[2.] He ascended visibly in the view of the apostles: *While they beheld, he was taken up;* he was not suddenly snatched from them, as Elijah was, nor secretly and privily taken away, as Enoch was; but in the presence of them all, both his apostles and disciples, he ascended up into heaven.

[3.] He ascended principally by the mighty power of his godhead: thus never any ascended up into heaven but Jesus Christ; for though Enoch and Elijah were assumed into heaven, yet not by their power, nor by themselves, it was God's power by which they ascended, and it was by the help and ministry of angels.

[4.] He ascended in a cloud: *While they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight.* Hereby he shews that he is Lord of all the creatures; he had already trampled upon the earth, walked upon the sea, vanquished hell or the grave, and now the clouds receive him, and the heavens are opened to make way for this King of glory to enter in.

2. *When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.* (1.) He led them captive, who had captivated us. Death was led captive without a sting; hell was led captive as one that had lost her victory; the serpent's head being bruised, was led before him in triumph, as was Goliath's head by David, returning from the victory. (2.) He gave gifts unto men; this was as the shutting up Christ's triumph, in his ascension up to heaven: what these gifts were, we shall speak in the mission of the Holy Ghost.

(3.) Whither he ascended, the gospel tells us, into heaven; only Paul saith, *that he ascended far above all heavens.* But the meaning is, he went above all those visible heavens, into those heavenly mansions, where the angels and the spirits of the just have their abode.

(4.) Why he ascended; the reasons are, 1. On Christ's part, that through his passion he might pass to glory. *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory?—*

2. On our part:

1. That in our stead he might triumph over sin, death, and hell. In his resurrection he conquered, but in his ascension he led sin, death, and the devil in triumph, at his chariot wheels. And the meaning of the psalmist, and of the apostle, *When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive;* is, He vanquished and triumphed over all our enemies; he overcame the world, he bound the devil, he spoiled hell, he weakened sin, he destroyed death, and now he makes a public triumphal show of them in his own person. It is to the same purpose that the apostle speaks elsewhere, *Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in himself;* it is a

manifest allusion to the manner of triumphs, after victories, amongst the Romans: first, they spoiled the enemy upon the place, ere they stirred off the field; and this was done by Christ on the cross: and then they made a public triumphal show; they rode through the streets in the greatest state, and had all their spoils carried before them; and the kings and nobles whom they had taken, they tied to their chariots, and led them as captives: and this did Christ at his ascension; *then he openly triumphed in himself,* that is, in his own power and strength.

2. That he might lead us the way, and open to us the doors of glory.

3. That he might assure us that now he had run through all those offices which he was to perform here on earth for our redemption. First, he was to act as our surety, and then he was to ascend as our head, our advocate, as the first-fruits, the captain, the prince of life, the author of salvation, the forerunner of his people.

4. That he might thoroughly convince believers, of their perfect righteousness. *The Spirit, when he comes,* saith Christ, *shall convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment:—of sin, because they believe not on me;—of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more.* If Christ had not fulfilled all righteousness, there had been no going to heaven for him, nor remaining there; but his ascension to heaven proclaims openly—1. That he hath completely finished the work he had to do for us here. 2. That God was well pleased with Jesus Christ, and with what he had done and suffered for us. 3. That we have our share in heaven with him; he went not up as a single person, but virtually, or mystically, he carried up all believers with him into glory. 4. That he hath a new design to be acted in heaven for us: he is taken up into glory, that he may act gloriously the second part of our righteousness; I mean that he might apply it, and send down his Spirit to convince us of it. Three great things, Christ acts for us now in glory. First, he is in place of an advocate for us, he liveth to intercede for us. Secondly, he is the great provider for us; he is laying in a stock of glory for us against we come there: *In my Father's house are many mansions.—I go to prepare a place for you.* Thirdly, he sends down his Spirit to convince us, that Christ's righteousness is ours. Indeed the means of procuring this, was the life and death of Christ; but the means of applying this righteousness, are those following acts of Christ's resurrection, ascension, session, intercession. By his death he obtained righteousness for us, but by his ascension he applies righteousness to us.

Sect. II.—*Of God's Right Hand, and of Christ's Session there.*

For the session of Christ at God's right hand, I shall examine,—1. What is God's right hand? 2. What is it to sit there?

3. According to what nature doth Christ sit there? 4. Why is it that he sits at the right hand of God?

1. What is this right hand of God? I answer, The right hand of God is the majesty, dignity, dominion, power, and glory of God. *The right hand of the Lord is exalted; the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly.—Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.*

2. What is it to sit at the right hand of God? I answer, it is not any corporal session at God's right hand; which Stephen contradicts, saying, *I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.* The words sitting or standing, are both metaphorical, and borrowed from the custom of kings, who place those they honour, and to whom they commit the power of government, at their right hand; more particularly, this sitting at God's right hand implies two things: 1. His glorious exaltation. 2. The actual administration of his kingdom.

(1.) Christ is exalted: *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow.* This session is the supreme dignity and glory given by the Father unto Christ, after his ascension; this session is the peerless exaltation of the Mediator in his kingdom of glory. But how was Christ exalted? I answer: 1. In the regard of his divine nature; not really, or in itself. Impossible it was that the divine nature should receive any intrinsical glory, because all fulness of glory essentially belonged unto it; but declaratory, or by way of manifestation; so it was, that his divinity, during the time of his humiliation, lay hidden and overshadowed: but now, in his session, that divinity and glory which he had always with the Father, was shewed forth and declared: *He was declared to be the Son of God with power,* both at his resurrection and at his session. 2. In regard of his human nature; and yet that must be understood soberly, for I cannot think that Christ's human nature was at all exalted in regard of the grace of personal union, or in regard of the habitual perfections of his human soul, because he possessed all these from the beginning; but in regard of those interceptions of the beams of the godhead and divine glory, and in respect of the restraints of that sense and sweetness, and feeling operations of the beatifical vision, during his humiliation: in these respects Christ was exalted in his human nature, and had all the glory from the Deity communicated to it, which possibly in any way it was capable of.

(2.) Christ reigns, or actually administers his glorious kingdom; and this is the principal part of Christ's sitting at God's right hand. So the psalmist: *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool:*

the Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion, rule thou in the midst of thy enemies. The apostle is yet more large: *God set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.* Some describe this session at God's right hand, to be all one with his reigning in equal power and glory with the Father; but the Son hath always so reigned, and the Holy Ghost hath always so reigned, who yet is not said in scripture to sit at the right hand of the Father: I believe therefore there is something in this session or reign of Christ, which doth difference it from that reigning power and glory of the Father, and of the Son as only God, and of the Holy Ghost; and if we would know what that is, I would call it an actual administration of his kingdom, or an immediate executing of his power and glory over every creature as Mediator. And this made Christ say, *The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son,* as Mediator. You may object, Christ was Mediator immediately after his incarnation, but he did not actually administer his kingdom then. I answer, it is true; Christ for a time did empty himself, and laid aside the actual administration of his kingdom; but immediately after his ascension, the Father, by a voluntary dispensation, resigned it to the Son again: 'Come now,' saith the Father, 'and take thou power over every creature, till the time that all things shall be subdued under thee.' This right the one relinquished in the time of that humiliation of himself, and this right the other conferred at the time of the exaltation of his Son.

3. According to what nature is Christ said to sit at the right hand of God? I answer, according to both natures: first, he sits at God's right hand as God; hereby his divinity was declared, and his kingdom is such, that none that is a poor creature can possibly execute. 2. He sits at God's right hand as man too; hereby his humanity was exalted, and a power is given to Christ as man: *He hath given him power to execute judgment, in as much as he is the Son of man.*

Sect. III.—*Of the Reasons why Christ doth sit on God's Right Hand.*

Why doth Christ sit at the right hand of God? I answer: 1. On Christ's part, that he might receive power and dominion over all the creatures. *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth:* he speaks of it as done, because it was immediately to be performed; Christ at his session received a power imperial over every creature.

2. On our part, many reasons might be given:

1. That he might be the head of his church; in a strict sense, as the head is conjoined with the body and members, so is Christ the head of his church. To this purpose he sits at God's right hand, that having now fulness of grace and glory in himself, he might be ready to communicate the same to his church, who are as the members of his body, that he might give them grace here, and glory hereafter; when he shall deliver up his kingdom to his Father, and be all in all.

2. That he might be the object of divine adoration; then especially it was said and accomplished, *Let all the angels of God worship him: and let all men honour the Son, as they honour the Father.* After Christ's session, Stephen looked up into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and then he worshipped; and called upon God, saying, *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.* It is true, the ground of this divine adoration, is the union of the two natures of Christ, and therefore the Magi worshipped him at his birth; and as soon as ever he came into the world, the angels of God worshipped him: but because by his session at God's right hand, the divine nature was manifested, and the human nature was exalted to that glory which it never had before; therefore now especially, and from this time, was the honour and dignity of worship communicated to him as God and man. *God highly exalted him, and gave him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

3. That he might intercede for his saints. *Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum: We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.* He is set on the right hand of God, as an high priest or minister to intercede for us: *for as Christ is not entered into the holy place made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.*

4. That true believers may assuredly hope, by virtue of Christ's session, to sit themselves in the kingdom of glory. Christ living in heaven is the very figure of us; Christ's person is the great model and first draught of all that shall be done to his body, the saints: therefore he is said to be the captain of our salvation, that leads us on; he is said to be our forerunner into glory. He breaks the clouds first, he appears first before God, he sits down first, and is glorified first, and then we follow.

5. That he might defend the church against her enemies; and at last destroy all the enemies of the church.

6. That he might send down the Holy Ghost: to this purpose

Christ told his disciples whilst he was yet on earth, that he must ascend into heaven, and reign there: *It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him to you.* Christ is now in heaven, and sits at God's right hand, that he may send us his Spirit, by whose forcible working we seek after heaven, and heavenly things, where now Christ sits.

Sect. IV.—*Of the Time when, and the Persons to whom, the Holy Ghost was sent.*

No sooner was Christ set down at God's right hand, but he sends down the Holy Ghost. It was an use amongst the ancients, in days of great joy and solemnity, to give gifts and to send presents unto men: thus Christ, in the day of his majesty and inauguration, in that great and solemn triumph, when he ascended up on high, led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

And when the day of the Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place; and suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting; and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance. Out of these words I shall observe these particulars: The time when—the persons to whom—the manner how—the measure what—and the reasons why, the Holy Ghost was sent.

1. For the time when the Holy Ghost was sent, it is said, *When the day of Pentecost was fully come.* This was a feast of the Jews, called πεντηκοστὴ; because it was ever kept on the fiftieth day after the second of the passover. Fifty days were the appointed time of the Jews' harvest: their harvest being bounded, as it were, with two remarkable days, the one being the beginning, and the other the end thereof: the beginning was the second of the passover; the end was the fiftieth after, called Pentecost; upon the beginning they offered a sheaf of the first-fruits of their harvest. Upon the Pentecost they offered two wave loaves; the sheaf being offered, all the after-fruits throughout the land were sanctified; and the two loaves being offered, it was a sign of the harvest being ended; and now we find, that as there were fifty days betwixt the beginning and the Pentecost, so there were fifty days betwixt Christ's resurrection, and the coming down of the Holy Ghost. As on the day of Pentecost, the Israelites came to mount Sinai, and received the law; so the very same day is accomplished that prophecy, *Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem:* now was the promulgation of the gospel, called by James, the royal law, as

given by Christ our King, and written in the hearts of his servants, by this Holy Ghost; it seems to shadow out the great difference betwixt the law and the gospel; the law is given with terror, in lightning and thunder; but the gospel is given without terror, there was no lightning and thunder now; no, the Holy Ghost slides down from heaven, and with joy sits on the heads, and in the hearts, of his saints.

2. For the persons to whom the Holy Ghost was sent; it is said, *To all that were with one accord in one place:* who they were, it is not here expressed; yet from the former chapter we may conjecture, they were the twelve apostles, together with Joseph, called Barsabas, and the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brethren; these all continued with one accord in one place, for so was Christ's command, *that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.* It was the great promise of the Old Testament, that Christ should partake of our human nature; and it was the great promise of the New Testament, that we should partake of his divine nature; he was clothed with our flesh according to the former, and we are invested with his Spirit according to the latter promise. For this promise the apostles and others had long waited, and for the accomplishment they were now fitted and disposed. 1. They had waited for it from the ascension day, till the feast of Pentecost; he told them at the very instant of his ascension, that he would send the Holy Ghost, and therefore bid them stay together until that hour; upon which command they continued waiting until the day of Pentecost was fully come. *He that believeth shall not make haste,* saith Isaiah. But, 2. As they waited for the Spirit, so they were rightly disposed to receive the Spirit, for they were all with one accord in one place. To those that accord, is the Spirit given; where is discord, jars, divisions, factions, there is no Spirit of God; for the Spirit is the author of concord, peace, unity, and amity: and can we imagine that essential unity will enter but where there is unity? Can the Spirit of unity come, or remain, but where there is unity of spirit? Verily there is not, there cannot be, a more certain disposition to make us meet for the Spirit, than that quality in us that is likest to his nature; and that is unity, love, concord. Do we marvel that the Spirit doth scarcely pant in us? Alas, we are not all of one accord; the very first point is wanting to make us meet for the coming of the Holy Ghost upon us.

Sect. V.—*Of the Manner how the Holy Ghost was sent.*

For the manner how he was sent, or how he came to these apostles; we may observe these particulars:—

He came suddenly; which either shews the majesty of the

miracle that is gloriously done, which is suddenly done; or the truth of the miracle, there could be no imposture or fraud in it, when the motion of it was so sudden; or the purpose of the miracle, which was to awake and affect them to whom it came; usually sudden things startle us, and make us look up. We may learn to receive those holy motions of the Spirit, which sometimes come suddenly, and we know not how; I am persuaded the man breathes not amongst us Christians, that sometimes feels not the stirrings, movings, breathings, of the Spirit of God; O that men would take the wind while it blows, and the water while the angel moves it; as not knowing when it will, or whether ever it will blow again.

2. He came from heaven. The place seems here to commend the gift: as from earth, earthly things arise; so from heaven, heavenly, spiritual, eternal things.

3. He comes down from heaven like a wind; the comparison is most apt. Of all bodily things, the wind is least bodily; it is invisible, and comes nearest to the nature of a spirit: it is quick and active as the spirit is. But more especially the Holy Ghost is compared to a wind in respect of its irresistible workings; as nothing can resist the wind, so nothing can resist the Spirit of God. Again, the Holy Ghost is compared to wind, in respect of its free actings; the wind bloweth where it listeth, and so the Spirit bloweth where it listeth: grace makes no gain of man's work; free-will may indeed move and run, but if it be too good, it must be moved, and driven, and breathed upon by God's free grace.

4. He came like a rushing mighty wind: as the wind is sometimes of that strength, that it rends in sunder mountains and rocks, it pulls up trees, it blows down buildings; so are the operations of the Holy Spirit; it takes down all before it, it made a conquest of the world, beginning at Jerusalem, and spreading itself over all the earth.

5. He filled all the house where they were sitting; there were none there that were not filled with the Holy Ghost; all the men and women (an hundred and twenty,) in this room were visited from on high, for the Holy Ghost came upon them, and dwelt in them; it filled all the house where they were sitting, to signify that all the other houses of Jerusalem felt none of this mighty rushing wind: have we not sometimes experience of this in our very congregations? One sound is heard, one breath doth blow, and it may be one or two, and no more hears the sound, or feels the breath inwardly, saving; it may be one here, and another there, shall feel the Spirit, shall be touched with it sensibly; but twenty on this side them, and forty on that side them, all becalmed, and go their way no more moved, than when they came into God's presence. O that this Spirit of the Lord would come daily and constantly into our congregations! O that it would blow through

them, and through! O that it would fill every soul in the assembly, with the breath of heaven! Come, Holy Spirit; *awake, O north wind, and come, thou south, and blow upon our gardens, that the spices thereof may flow out.*

6. He came down in the form of tongues. The apostles were not only inspired for their own benefit, but they had gifts bestowed on them, to impart the benefit to more than themselves. But why did the Holy Ghost appear like tongues? I answer, the tongue is the sole instrument of knowledge, which conveys the same from man to man: though the soul be the fountain from whence all wisdom springs, yet the tongue is that channel whereby this wisdom and knowledge is communicated. In the like manner the Holy Ghost is the sole teacher of all truth; though Christ be the wisdom of God, yet the Holy Ghost is the teacher of this wisdom to men; and hence it is, that the Holy Ghost appeared in the form of tongues.

And yet not merely in the form of tongues, but, 1. They were cloven tongues, to signify that the apostles should speak in divers languages: if there must be a calling of the Gentiles, they must needs have the tongues of the Gentiles wherewith to call them: if they were debtors not only to the Jews but to the Grecians, nor only to the Grecians but to the Barbarians also, then must they have the tongues not only of the Jews, but of the Grecians and Barbarians, to go and teach all nations. 2. They were fiery tongues; to signify that there should be an efficacy or fervour in their speaking; the world was so overwhelmed with ignorance and error, that the apostles' lips had need to be touched with a coal from the altar: tongues of flesh would not serve the turn, nor words of air, but there must be fire put into the tongue, and life into the words they speak: O that we of the ministry had these fiery tongues! O that the Spirit would put live coal into our speeches! may we not fear that the Spirit is gone while the people are dead, and we are no more lively in our ministry? It is said of Luther, that when he heard one preach very faintly, "Cold, cold," says he, "this is cold preaching, here's no heat at all to be gotten." O, when the Spirit comes, it comes with a tongue of fire; instead of words, sparks of fire will fall from us on the hearts of hearers.

3. These cloven tongues sat upon each of them, to signify their constancy and continuance; they abode still, they continued steady, without any stirring or starting.

Sect. VI.—*Of the Measure of the Holy Ghost now given, and the Reasons why he was sent.*

For the measure, what or how much of the Spirit was now given? This question is necessary, because we bring in the Spirit's mission after Christ's ascension, as if the Holy Ghost

had not been given before his time. That this was the time of the coming of the Holy Ghost, is very plain; but that the Holy Ghost was not given before this time, we cannot say; certainly the prophets spake by him, and the apostles had him, not only when they were first called, but more fully when *he breathed on them, and said unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghost.* So that if ye study the reconciliation of these things, I know not any way better, than to put it on the measure or degrees of the Spirit: here was the difference; before this the Spirit was but sprinkled, as it were, upon them, but now they were all blown upon with a mighty wind.

3. At first he was sent only in drops and dew, but now he was poured out in showers and abundance: *The Holy Ghost*, saith Paul, *was shed on us abundantly.* As there are degrees in the wind—a breath, or a blast, or a stiff gale; we cannot deny degrees in the Spirit,—the apostles at Christ's resurrection received the Spirit, but now they were filled with the Spirit of Christ.

4. For the reasons why the Holy Ghost was sent, they are several.

1. That all the prophecies concerning this mission be accomplished. Isaiah speaks of a time when *the Spirit should be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness should be a fruitful field.* And Zachary prophecies, that *in that day I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication.* And Joel prophecies yet more expressly: *It shall come to pass, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also upon the servants, and upon the handmaids, in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.* But of all the prophecies concerning the mission of the Holy Ghost, our Saviour gives the clearest and most particular: *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth. Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will send him unto you.* It was of necessity that all these prophecies and promises must be accomplished, and therefore was the Holy Ghost sent amongst us.

2. That the holy apostles might be furnished with gifts and graces suitable to their estates, conditions, stations, places. To this purpose, no sooner was the Spirit sent. but *they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.* They were filled with the Holy Ghost; not that they were before empty, but now they were more full of the Spirit than ever, and they spake with other

tongues, other than they had learned; probably they understood no tongue but the Syriac, till this time, but now on a sudden they could speak Greek, Latin, Arabic, Persian, Parthian, and what not! the wisdom and mercy of God is very observable herein, that the same means of divers tongues, which was the destroying of Babel, should be the means conferred on the apostles, to work the building of Sion; that confusion of tongues should be united to God's glory.

3. That he might fill the hearts of all the saints, and make them temples for the Holy Ghost: *Know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God: and ye are not your own?* It is said, that after the mighty rushing wind and cloven fiery tongues, *they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues.* First, they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and when they spake with other tongues: the Holy Ghost begins inward, and works outward: it first alters the mind, before it changes the speech; it first works on the spirit, before on the phrase of utterance; this was the first work of the Spirit, it filled them. And thus for the daily ministration, such must be appointed as were full of the Holy Ghost. And Stephen is said to be full of the Holy Ghost; and Barnabas is called a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is usually said to fill the saints: only whether it be the person of the Holy Ghost, or the impressions of the Holy Ghost, is a very great question; for my part, I am apt to incline to their mind, who say, not only the impressions of the Spirit, the qualities of holiness, the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, or as some think habitual; the Holy Ghost himself doth fill, and dwell, and reign, in the hearts of all regenerate men.

CHAP. II.

Sect. I.—*Of Knowing Jesus as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation in his Ascension, Session, and Mission of the Spirit.*

Let us know Jesus, carrying on the great work of our salvation in his ascension into heaven, in his session at God's right hand, and in his mission of the Holy Ghost: these are points of great use; if these transactions had not been, where had we been? Here is an object of admiration indeed; the very angels at the sight of it stood admiring and adoring; it took up their heart, astonished their understanding. Come then, and, O my soul, do thou take a view of that which they admire, the design concerns thee in particular; and therefore study close this argument, and know it for thyself. Study first the ascension of Christ.

how, and whither, and why he ascended. Secondly, study the session of Christ at God's right hand: O the riches of that spiritual, heavenly knowledge!

3. Study the mission of the Holy Ghost; not a circumstance in it, but deserves thy study: what endeavours have there been to dive into the secrets of nature! what volumes have been written of physic, metaphysics, mathematics! and is not this subject Christ? Is not every of these subjects, Christ's ascension, Christ's mission of the Holy Spirit, of more value and benefit than all those! Come, study that piece of the Bible, wherein these are written; there is not a line or expression of Christ in the Scripture, but 'tis matter enough for a whole age to comment on; thou needest not to leave old principles for new discoveries, for in these very particulars thou mightest find successive sweetness unto all eternity.

Sect. II.—*Of considering Jesus in that respect.*

Let us consider Jesus, carrying on this work of our salvation in these particulars:

And to take them in order,—

1. Consider Christ's ascension into heaven. What, shall he ascend, and shall we not in our contemplations follow after him? Gaze, O my soul, on this wonderful object; thou needest not fear any check from God or angel, so that thy contemplation be spiritual and divine. No sooner had Christ finished his work of redemption here on earth, but on the mount called Olivet he assembles with his disciples, where having given them commands, he begins to mount; and being a little lifted up into the air, presently a cloud receives him into her lap. Herein is a clear demonstration of his godhead; clouds are usually in scripture put for the house, or temple, or receptacle of God himself. How often is it said, that *the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud?* and that *he called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud?* and that *the Lord descended in the cloud?* is not the clouds God's own chariot? *Behold, the Lord rideth on a swift cloud! And O my Lord my God, thou art very great*, saith David; great indeed, and he proves it thus, *who maketh the clouds his chariot.* Jesus Christ in his ascension to heaven enters by the way into a cloud; this was his chariot, led by ten thousands of his angels. *The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; the Lord is among them in Sinai in the holy place: thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men.*

But stay not thy contemplation in the cloud, he ascends yet higher, through the air, and through the clouds, and through that heaven of fixed stars, nor stood he still till he came to the heaven of heavens. In all this triumphant march, some tell us

of an heavenly harmony made by the blessed angels; and that this is the meaning of the psalmist: *God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.* In this meditation pass not over thy duty, which immediately follows: *Sing praises unto God, sing praises; sing praises unto our King, sing praises;— sing unto God, sing praises to his name, extol him that rideth upon the heavens, by his name JAH, and rejoice before him.* Thou hast cause, O my soul, to praise him, and to rejoice before him, especially if thou considerest that Christ ascended not for himself, but for thee; it is God in our nature that is gone up to heaven, Christ as a public person ascended up to heaven; thy interest is in this very ascension of Jesus Christ, and therefore dost thou consider thy head as soaring up? O let every member praise his name!

And yet stay not by the way, but consider further; Christ being now arrived at heaven doors, those heavenly spirits that accompanied him began to say, *Lift up your heads, O ye gates, even lift up yourselves, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in!* To whom some of the angels that were within, not ignorant of his person, but admiring his majesty and glory, said again, *Who is the King of glory?* And then they answered, *The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle;* and thereupon those *twelve gates of the holy city of New Jerusalem* opened of their own accord, and Jesus Christ with all his ministering spirits entered in. O my soul, how should this heighten thy joy, and enlarge thy comforts, in that Christ is now received up into glory! every sight of Christ is glorious, and in every sight thou shouldest wait on the Lord Jesus Christ for some glorious manifestations of himself. Come, live up to the rate of this great mystery; view Christ as entering into glory, and thou wilt find the same sparkles of glory on thy heart.

2. Consider Christ's session at God's right hand: no sooner was Christ entered into heaven, but he is brought before his heavenly Father; and a dominion was given him above all creatures, above the hierarchy of all the angels: O the glory of Christ at his first entrance into glory! immediately all the angels fell down and worshipped him, immediately his Father welcomed him with the highest grace that ever was shewn. *Come,* said he, *sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.* O my soul, meditate on this session of Christ at God's right hand, and thence draw some virtue into thyself: what! was Christ exalted? had he a name given him above every name? walk then as becomes those that have so glorious a head: O defile not that nature which in thy Christ was so highly honoured!

3. Consider the mission of the Holy Ghost: *When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.* He gave gifts, or the gift of gifts, the gift of the Holy Ghost: O

my soul, consider this princely gift of Christ! Such a gift was never before, but when God gave his Son: *God so loved the world, that he gave his Son;* and Christ so loved the world, that he gave his Spirit. But consider especially to whom this Spirit was given; the application of the gift is the very soul of thy meditation: *Unto us a Son is given,* said the prophet; and, *unto us the Holy Ghost is given,* saith the apostle. And yet above all, consider the reasons of this gift in reference to thyself; was it not to make thee a temple of the Holy Ghost? Stand a while on this! admire, O my soul, at the unspeakable love of Christ in this! It was infinite love to come down into our nature; but this is more, to come down into thy heart by his Holy Spirit: he came near to us then, but he comes nearer now, for now he unites himself unto thy person, now he comes and dwells in thy soul by his Spirit; come! here's that which will content thy vast desires: *Christ is in thee by his Spirit;* will not this content the utmost capacity of an heart? surely he is too covetous whom God himself cannot suffice: if thou hast Christ, thou hast all things; and if thou hast the Spirit of Christ, thou hast Christ himself, not notionally, but really, essentially, substantially, by his Spirit; it is the very Spirit of Christ, the Spirit itself, the Holy Ghost itself in his own person, that is united to thee, and dwells in thee; nor only comes he in person, but he brings along with him all his train: hath he not endowed thee with gifts? hath he not divided a portion to thee in thy place and calling? observe it, and be thankful, if thou hast a gift of prayer, of prophecy, of wisdom, of knowledge, it flows from this Holy Spirit: *Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ,* or according to the measure of the Spirit, who is the gift of Christ. And, *all these worketh that one and the same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.* But besides a gift, hath he not endowed thee with his grace? hath he not planted in thy soul the power, the principle, of grace? hast thou not felt the quickenings, stirrings, of the Spirit of God, commanding thy faith, love, zeal, and other graces? hath he not many a time, at some mighty streight, at some prevailing temptation, when thou wast even ready to yield to Satan, come in as betwixt the bridge and water, and given thee grace to help in time of need? O the sweet incomes of the Spirit of God! as he is a holy Spirit, so he makes holy hearts; and if there be holiness in thy heart, what is it but an emanation of the Spirit of God? hast thou not sometimes felt the joy unspeakable and full of glory? a drop of heaven's joy, as the earnest of thy inheritance? why, all these are but the workings of the promised Comforter: *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.* Another effect is, the seal of the Spirit stamped on thee. I will not say this is absolutely necessary,

but hast thou not sometime been assured of thy salvation, by an irradiation of the Spirit on thy graces? Sometimes the Spirit is pleased to shine with its bright, and glorious, and heavenly beams into our souls, and then we are assured: hence the apostle prays for the Ephesians, *that they might have the Spirit of revelation.* If the Spirit shine upon our graces, then it seals: O consider this shining-sealing work, and leave not till the Spirit dart in a spiritual light, and give thee a revelation, knowledge, and persuasion, of thy effectual calling.

Sect. III.—*Of Desiring Jesus in that respect.*

Let us desire Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation in these particulars: who seeing Christ ascending into heaven, would not be glad to ascend up with him? seeing Christ, to sit down with him? Who seeing Christ scatter his gifts and spirit amongst his saints, would not cry, 'Come, Holy Spirit; O Christ, give me thy Spirit; thou that givest gifts unto men, come, and bestow these gifts on me! even upon me!' The believing soul cannot hear of Christ in any true discovery of his grace and glory, but it must needs send out many breathings after him.—'O that Christ were mine! O that I had any interest in this transaction!' It is true, these transactions are past, but the virtue of them continues still; and accordingly the virtue, power, and influence of these transactions must be the object of our desires; now what is the virtue of Christ's ascension, but that we might ascend? And what the virtue of Christ's session, but that we might sit down with him in his throne? And what the virtue of the mission of his Spirit, but that we might partake of the Holy Ghost? O let these be the objects of our desires; let us pant and breathe after these things.

1. Let us see Christ ascending, and so desire to ascend with him: when Christ ascended, it was not merely for himself, but also in our stead: he ascended as a common person; as the high priest ascending into the holy of holies, he carried all the names of the twelve tribes on his breast; so Jesus Christ ascending into heaven, carried the names of all believers in the world on his breast, thereby shewing that they were likewise to come after him: in this case how should we long after him, and cry after him, as Elisha after Elijah when he saw him ascending, *My father! my father! the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!* How should we cry after him, 'O my Lord and my God! see that my name be written on thy breast! O that virtually I may ascend with thee, and that really and bodily I may at last ascend after thee!' A desire after Christ, and his ascension is the way to heaven; if thou wilt ascend after Christ, set thy desires upon Christ; if thou wilt arrive at true glory, breathe after Christ ascending up into his glory. O when will

it once be, that by the virtue of Christ's ascension I shall ascend!

2. Let us see Christ sitting down at the right hand of God, and so desire to sit with him; when Christ sat down, it was not in his own right simply, as it is his inheritance, but with relation to his members: *He hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.* He sat down as a common person, thereby shewing that we were to sit down with him in our proportion: *Him that overcometh, I will grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.* O my soul, desire this, for this is worthy of thy desire: this is a great thing, an high exaltation, another manner of honour than any this world affords; only take heed of apprehending it after a carnal way. This very exaltation consists in the image of God, and communion with God; whatever thou givest or deniest, Lord, give me this, and I have enough for ever.

3. Let us see Christ's mission of his Holy Spirit, and desire a share in that gift. We cannot expect to sit with Christ, but we must first have the spirit of Christ. Consider, O my soul, all things here below are either temporal or spiritual; and of things spiritual this is the sum, *the indwelling of the Spirit.* O Lord, give me thyself, and that contains all gifts; O give me thy Spirit, and thou canst not but with him give me all things. O what longings! O what pantings and gaspings should there be in thy spirit after this Spirit! come, Holy Spirit, O come and dwell in my soul! I know thou wilt make the place of thy feet glorious; if I have but thy presence, I shall be all glorious within.

Sect. IV.—*Of Hoping in Jesus in that respect.*

Let us hope in Jesus, carrying on the great work of our salvation in these particulars; this was the apostle's prayer: *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing; that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost:* could we abound in hope that Christ's ascension, session, and mission of his Spirit did belong to us, we should never be ashamed: O then let us look to our hope, and be sure that it be of the right stamp! which in reference to every of these passages, we may examine thus:

1. If Christ's ascension be mine, then am I ascended with Christ: for we may ascend into heaven by faith and love, though for the present we are on earth: *If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God: set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth.* If Christ our head be ascended, then we that are his members must follow after him in our affections.

Christ tells us, *where our treasure is, there will our hearts be also.* If Christ our treasure be ascended into heaven, our loves, our affections, our hearts, will follow after him; and if our hearts be in heaven, no question but we ourselves, both souls and bodies, shall at last ascend.

2. If Christ's session be mine, then am I set down with Christ in heavenly places; I mean not bodily, but by faith, which faith makes it as sure to my soul as if I had a foot already in heaven: *Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.* By faith I now sit in heavenly places, in that I verily believe I shall do it one day; my hope is now certain, in that I am as sure of that I look for, as I am of that I have already received. The apostle said of Christ, *We see not yet all things put under him;* but he presently answers, *We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honour:* and so we may be sure the thing is as good as done; for if he be above, all must come under; in like manner we see not ourselves in present possession, but we see Christ crowned, and ourselves sitting with him virtually; and therefore at last we shall see ourselves actually crowned, and sitting together with Christ in heavenly places.

3. If Christ's Spirit be mine, and sent to me, then have I both the person and train of the Spirit of Christ. It is the having the Spirit, and the working of the Spirit in me, that is my evidence of the Spirit's mission: I look upon this as the greatest question, and the weightiest case of conscience, that can be propounded—whether the Spirit of Christ doth reside in us? or whether we have a well-grounded hope to say of ourselves, that we have the indwelling of the Spirit of God? *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God,* saith the apostle, *and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* And again, *Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost?* In this he seems to put it out of question, that true Christians know the Spirit of God dwells in them; if we know not this, we cannot know that we have any part in Christ, because the Holy Spirit is the principal bond of our union; if we know not this, we cannot know that we are justified, for we have nothing to do with Christ's righteousness, by which we are justified, until by our spiritual union Christ is made ours; if we know not this, we cannot know that we are the adopted children of God, for it is the Spirit of adoption, whereby *we cry in our hearts, Abba, Father:* if we know not this, we cannot know that we are sanctified, for it is the Spirit which is the beginner and perfecter of our sanctification: if we know not this, we cannot know that our prayers are heard, for it is *the Spirit that helps our infirmities, and that makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered:* if we know not this, we cannot know whether we are in error or truth, or whether our religion be true or false, for it is the Spirit

who enlightens, and leads us into all truth: if we know not this, we cannot know our own comforts, for he is the only true comforter. Come then, and put we ourselves to the trial; let us search whether we have the Spirit of Christ; which we may resolve, (if we will not deal deceitfully with our own hearts,) by these following signs:—

1. The Spirit of Christ is the spirit of illumination. If he dwell in us, he will enlighten our eyes, reveal to us those saving truths of God as they are in Jesus: *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things.—But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.—But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any men teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you all things;* and hence it is that this Holy Spirit is called *the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God.*

2. The Spirit of Christ is a spirit of prayer. *I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication.—Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered.* It is not said that the Spirit teaches us words, and fluent phrases, but it teaches us to pray in the heart with sighs and groans.

3. The Spirit of Christ is a spirit of sanctification. The apostle having told the Corinthians that they had been notorious sinners, saith further, that *they were washed and sanctified by the Spirit of God.* Hence the Holy Spirit is called *the Spirit of holiness,* because he makes us holy. If we have this Spirit, it inclines our hearts to things above, it mortifies our lusts, it brings us nearer to God: the spirit therefore that is impure, and encourages men in sin, and cries up carnal liberty, is certainly none of the Spirit of Christ; and by this one sign many carnal pretenders of our times may be convicted.

4. The Spirit of Christ is a spirit of love. *God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him:* as the Spirit is love, so it begets love in the hearts of his people: *The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.* All these graces are the fruits of the Spirit, but the first grace in the link is love: by his Spirit we are taught to love God, not only for his benefits, but in respect of his nature; for his goodness, justice, holiness; by his Spirit we are taught to love any thing that hath the stamp and image of God upon it: *but as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you, for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.*

5. The Spirit of Christ is a witnessing Spirit. *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children*

of God: and *every one that believeth hath the witness in himself.*

The witnessing of the Spirit is an office of the Spirit, whereby it works the soul into a knowledge, persuasion, or conclusion of its acceptance with God in Christ.

2. How doth the Spirit thus witness? I answer, 1. Immediately. 2. Mediately.

1. Concerning the immediate testimony of the Spirit there is some controversy: Antinomians would have no other testimony but this; all other evidences (say they) are deceiving evidences; or if not deceiving, yet to make use of them were but to light a candle to the sun; for what are the graces of the Spirit in comparison of the Spirit's own testimony? and it may be the running into this extreme hath caused others absolutely to deny any such testimony, or at least to say,—for these enthusiasms or inspirations, let them boast of them that have them, we know no such thing. Methinks a middle betwixt these is most consonant to truth, for neither can I reject the graces of our assurance, neither dare I deny but there is something of the work of the Spirit's testimony which is an immediate work.

Certainly there is a work, wherein the Spirit acts as in illumination; and infusion of good motions into us, wherein by a secret influence upon the heart, he quiets and calms the troubled soul concerning its condition by his own immediate power, without any grounds from scripture without, or graces within.

There is a threefold work of the Spirit, saith Mr. Caryl: 1. To convey and plant grace in the soul. 2. To help us to exercise the graces which are planted there. 3. To shine upon and enlighten those graces: this last work the Spirit fulfils two ways; 1. By arguments and inferences, which is a mediate work. 2. By presence and influence, which is an immediate work; this the apostle calls, *witness-bearing; there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and water, and blood:* the Spirit brings in the witness of water and blood, which is a mediate work: but besides and above these, he gives a distinct witness of his own, which is his immediate work, and is, in a way of peculiarity and transcendency, called the witness of the Spirit. As it is with the motions of the Spirit, many a time the Spirit excites a man to such or such duties, by laying his hand immediately upon the heart, and thereby inclining it to obey those motions: so in this case, when a poor soul sits in darkness, and sees no light, sometimes it is, as it were, taken up into the third heaven; and this is in such a way, that though the spirit of a man is immediately calmed by it, yet it cannot tell how it came to pass.

But for fear of mistakes, in this case observe we these rules:

1. That although the Spirit may immediately testify without express or formal application of a word, yet he never testifies but according to the word. If a man that never felt sin a burden,

that throws away all duties of religion, that never prays, reads, hears, or meditates, shall say, that he is filled with joy, peace, and the assurance of God's word, it is certain the holy Spirit is not the author of this, because the promise of peace belongs to none of his stamp; see *Mat.* xi. 28. *Isaiah* lvii. 15. *Mal.* v. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

2. That ordinarily the Spirit brings in his testimony either in duty, or after duty: *I have seen his ways, and I will heal him; I will lead him also, and restore comforts to him and to his mourners: I create the fruit of the lips, peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord, and I will heal him.* I know there may be a case of grievous temptations, and at such time the Spirit of God may come in by a sudden irradiation, and cheer the soul wonderfully, though it knows not how; yet usually the Spirit brings in his testimony either in duty, or not long after duty.

3. That such testimonies of the Spirit beget only an actual assurance during the present exigency, or in order to some present design that God is working thereby.

2. The Spirit witnesseth immediately; and that either without, or with argumentation,—but both from the word.

1. Without argumentation; and that is when the Spirit applies some suitable word to the soul, and without more ado enables the soul to close with that word. As for instance; thou art burdened for sin, and thou hast prayed earnestly for pardon of sin, and even then a secret whisper of the Spirit casts that word into thy heart, *I will heal thy backslidings, and love thee freely;* or such a voice as that, *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* Now this is a direct testimony; only I dare not leave it without a caution. Some can relate extraordinary passages of providence attending the coming in of such and such a word: as, that they did not know there was any such scripture, nor did they know where it was; and yet in opening the book, it was the very first place they cast their eye upon; or they wanted a book, and in the use of some other means unexpectedly a word was spoken, or remembered, so pat to the case, as if it had been a message from heaven: certainly the Spirit's hinting of words thus is very observable; yet a bare giving in of a word is no warrant that it comes from the Spirit, unless the soul come up to some end which the word itself pointeth at; for the ends it aimeth at, as quickening, comforting, supporting, acting of some graces, or such like; and by this we may know that the testimony is true, and proceeds from the Spirit of God.

2. With argumentation; and that is, when the Spirit brings in the testimony of blood and water: I may call it a testimony of graces, written in our hearts, and brought out by the Spirit in a way of argument; as thus—*He that believeth hath everlasting life: but I believe, therefore I have everlasting life.* The first pro-

position is the gospel; and in this way it is the first work of the Spirit to open our eyes for the understanding thereof. The second proposition is thy case, or my case; and here the Spirit enlightens the soul to see itself under that condition. But I believe—

In all cases, the assurance that the Spirit gives, maintains a soul in a way of reliance and dependence, when it sees no reason why he should do so; or it may be, when he sees reason why it should not be so: as it is said of Abraham in another case, that *he believed in hope against hope;* faith told him there was hope that he should be the father of many nations, when reason told him there was none. Again, the assurance that the Spirit gives, is attended with an high esteem of prayer, duties, ordinances; and in the issue (which is the most sure mark) it purifies the soul; *he that hath this hope purifieth himself, even as he is pure;* he is ever washing himself from sin, and watching against sin, and taking all possible care to keep himself pure and unspotted in this world; it keeps the soul humble and lowly, it being impossible that such a testimony of the Spirit, and so intimate a converse with God, and the light of his countenance, should not reflect low thoughts upon a man concerning himself; such a man cannot but say, 'Lord, what am I that thou hast brought me hitherto? What, for such a peevish, unbelieving, impatient soul as mine, to be carried in thy arms, and cheered with thy smiles, and to enjoy the comforts of thy Spirit? O what a wonderful, merciful, gracious God have I?'

O my soul, try now the hope of the Spirit's indwelling by these several signs: Art thou enlightened savingly in the knowledge of God, and of Christ? Hast thou a spirit of knowledge and supplication? a spirit of sanctification? a spirit of love? Hast thou ever had the immediate testimony of the Spirit? Hast thou ever had the mediate testimony of the Spirit without any argumentation? Hast thou unexpectedly lighted on some places of scripture that hath satisfied thy soul as with marrow and fatness? Or if not so neither, hast thou the immediate testimony of the Spirit with argumentation? Canst thou argue thus; *He that believeth shall be saved: but I believe, therefore I shall be saved.* Or if any doubt be made of the assumption; canst thou prove it by such other graces as accompany faith, and are the fruits of faith? Canst thou say, by the help and shinings of the Spirit, that these and these graces are in me, I love God and Christ, I repent of my sins:—surely then thy hope is well grounded; thou hast the indwelling of the Spirit; it is thine; even thine.

Sect. V.—*Of Believing in Jesus in this respect.*

Let us believe on Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in these particulars. Many scruples are in many hearts:

'What! is it possible that I should have any share in Christ's ascension, Christ's session, Christ's mission of his Spirit! Was it ever in God's heart that I should partake with Christ in all these glories? What is this, that earth should go up to heaven, that men should ascend to God? yea, that my soul with Christ, and by Christ, should ascend to God, and sit down with God in heavenly places? that my soul should have for its inmate the very same Spirit that Christ himself hath? O, I cannot, I dare not believe.'

Scrupulous souls, be not faithless, but believing; there is none of these particulars for which we have not a warrant out of the word of God; and therefore believe: I shall lay down, 1. Some directions, and 2. Some encouragements of faith.

1st. For directions of faith, observe, as before, these particulars.

1. Faith must directly go to Christ.

2. Faith must go to Christ as God in the flesh.

3. Faith must go to Christ as God in the flesh made under the law.

4. Faith must go to Christ, not only as made under the directive part of the law by his life, but under the penal part of the law, by his death.

5. Faith must go to Christ, not only as put to death in the flesh, but as quickened by the Spirit.

6. Faith must not only go to Christ as quickened by the Spirit, but as going into glory, as sitting down at God's right hand, and as sending the Holy Ghost. Faith should eye Christ as far as he goes: if he be ascended, so should faith; if he go into glory, and sit down there, and act there for his people, so should faith; and so should we in a way of believing follow after him, and take a view of all his transactions where he is: we have heard before how faith should go to Christ as dying, and as rising again; but yet faith is low, while it doth not go within the vail, and see him in glory; it is not enough to have only a faith of justification, but of glorification. O come let us see Christ in heaven, and we can have no less than a glorious faith! how many are there that never yet came to Christ as a glorified Christ! We are still in the lower form; many of us take in no more of Christ than what was done on the cross, we seldom follow Christ into heaven, to see what he is doing for us. O my soul! O my faith! mount up, and be upon the wing: Christ is gone up to heaven, Christ is sat down at God's right hand; Christ hath sent down his holy Spirit. He gave the gift of gifts, even the gift of the Holy Ghost himself. What! art not thou a partaker of this gift? O then look up unto Jesus in reference to all this, set him before thee: Christ in all these particulars is a right object for thy faith.

7. Faith in going to Christ, his ascension, session, and mission of the holy Spirit, is principally to look to the design of Christ,

in each of these particulars: Christ did nothing, but he had an end in it for our good; and here is the life of faith, to eye the meaning of Christ in all his doings. Now the ends of Christ's ascension, session, and mission of his Spirit, were several; I shall instance only in these few.

1. Christ ascended, that we might ascend. Look, whatever God acted on Christ's person, that he did as on our behalf, and he means to act the same on us. Was Christ crucified? So are we. Is Christ risen again? So we are risen with him. Is Christ gone up into glory? So are we: heaven is now opened and possessed by Jesus Christ for us, and at last we shall ascend even as he ascended. How should faith pry into this? As we must go through all ordinances and creatures till we come to Christ, so through all conditions of Christ until we come to glory.

2. Christ sat down, that we might sit with him in heavenly places: what is the end of Christ's session, but that he might invest all his saints with the same privilege? In this height of glory, Christ is the pattern of what we shall be; surely this is the very top of heaven; Christ is exalted above the heavens, that we might in our measure be exalted with Christ: it was Christ's prayer, that his Father, and he, and we, might be one, *as thou Father art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us.* O how should faith stand, and gaze on Christ in that respect? What! is he on God's right hand? and is he there preparing a mansion for my soul? What, shall I sit at the right hand of Christ? Admire, O my soul, this aim of Christ, the meaning of his exalting himself, it was to exalt thee; and the meaning of his exalting thee on this manner, is to manifest to all the world, what the Son of God is able to do, in raising so poor a creature to so rich a glory.

3. Christ sent down the Holy Ghost, that he might dwell in our souls, endow us with gifts and graces; that he might comfort us, seal us unto the day of redemption; fit us for glory. Amongst the many ends for which Christ sent down his holy Spirit, I shall insist only on these two—

1. That he might help us to *cry, Abba Father;* and make us come boldly to the throne of grace, as children to a father. It is the Spirit that takes us by the hand and leads us to the Father, when others stand at a distance, and cannot come near. Though others are kept out, yet the adopted child, who hath received the Spirit of adoption, can say, *Let me come to my Father; guards are appointed to keep out strangers, but not sons.*

2. That he might guide us into all truth; I mean into all necessary, fundamental, saving truths: In this respect we have need of the Spirit. He it is that dictates to us which is the true religion; he it is that transcribes upon our hearts that which was before only written in our books; he it is that not only reveals truth from without, but imprints it also upon the soul,

as a man doth a seal by impressing it on the wax; as the written word is the testimony without us, so are these impressions of the Spirit the testimony within us, by which we may know every necessary truth as it is in Jesus: unbelievers have a testimony without them, but believers have a double testimony, one without, and one within; and this witness within us will go with us and accompany us through all streights and difficulties. Men may take from us our bibles, teachers, friends, or imprison us where we cannot enjoy them; but they cannot take from us the Spirit of Christ: this witness; O what an excellent help is here to a poor Christian, beyond all the furniture of the most learned men, that want this testimony of the Spirit of Christ! surely this advantage will exceedingly furnish us against all temptations to any error, that is plainly contrary to the essentials of religion.

2d. For the encouragement of our faith to believe in Christ in reference to his ascension, session, and mission of his Spirit.

1. Consider the excellency of this object. What is it but Christ? Christ in his ascendant, regnant power? Christ in his marching, conquering, triumphing postures? in his free, and large, and magnificent gifts? *When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.* O the glory, O the excellency, of Christ in these respects; I believe this is the top of heaven's glory, to see and wonder at the virtues of him that sits on the throne at the right hand of God; to be filled, but never satiated, with the glory of Christ.

2. Consider the power, virtue, and influence of this object unto our souls' salvation. O what a stately tower have we here erected to see heaven on? Faith may stand, as it were, on this mount, and see itself in glory; O the flowings, the rich emanations of grace and glory that come from hence! O why do we toil ourselves in gathering sticks, when to-morrow we shall be out of this world, and go to Christ.

3. Consider of the suitableness of these objects to our several conditions; *Behold he comes leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills*, Cant. ii. 8. Gregory, that measured his leaps, thus gives them: he first leaps from his Father's mansion to his mother's womb; from her womb to the manger; from his manger to his cross; from his cross to his grave; from his grave up again to heaven: great leaps indeed, that shewed both his readiness to love, and willingness to save. O believe! believe thy part in Christ's ascension, Christ's session, Christ's mission of his holy Spirit, and thou mayest go singing to thy grave! a lively faith in such particulars would set a soul in heaven, even whilst on earth.

Sect. VI.—*Of Loving Jesus in that respect.*

Let us love Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in these particulars. Much has been said already of Christ's

conception, birth, life, death, resurrection; such arguments of love as are enough to swallow up souls in love; but as if all those were not enough for God, see here new mines, never known in the world before, opened in Jesus Christ. See! Christ for us and for our salvation is gone up to heaven, is set down at God's right hand, and hath sent down the Holy Ghost into our hearts. In the pouring out of these springs of heaven's love, how should our souls but open the mouth wide, and take in the streams of Christ's honey and milk; I mean his precious love-breathings?

Two things I shall instance in, which may be as the load-stones of our love to Christ; the first is his glory, and the second his bounty.

1. For his glory: No sooner was he ascended, and sat at God's right hand, but John the divine had a sight of him, and O what a glorious sight! *He was clothed with a garment down to the feet, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle; his head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters; and he had in his right-hand seven stars, and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and his countenance was as the sun that shineth in his strength:* when John saw him thus, he swoons at his feet. But Christ, for all his glory, holds his head, *saying, Fear not; I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, amen, and have the keys of hell and death.* A glorious Christ is good for dying sinners: would sinners but draw near and come and see this King in the chariot of love, and come and see his beauty, he would certainly draw their souls unto him: nay, say that all the damned in hell were brought up with their fiery chains to the door of heaven; could we let them look in, and behold the throne, and the Lamb, and the troops of glorified spirits clothed in white, with crowns of gold upon their heads, and palms in their hands, singing the eternal praises of their King; O how would they be sweetened in their pain, and ravished with those joys that are in Christ's face for evermore! O who can think of the glory that is in this delightful one, and not be swallowed up in love? Who can think of Christ's sitting at God's right hand, and sparkling in his glory round about, and casting out beams of glory through east, and west, and north, and south, through heaven, and earth, and hell, and not love him with a whole heart? I remember one dying, and hearing some discourse of Jesus Christ: *O* (said she) *speak more of this, let me hear more of this; be not weary of telling his praise; I long to see him, how should I but long to hear of him!* Surely I cannot say too much of Jesus Christ: O the loveliness, beauty, and glory of his countenance! can I speak or you hear of such a Christ? and are

we not all in a burning love? O my heart! how is it thou art not love-sick? how is it thou dost not charge the daughters of Jerusalem as the spouse did; *I charge ye, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him I am sick of love?*

2. For his bounty: No sooner was he ascended, and sat down at God's right hand, but *he gives gifts unto men;* and he sends down the Holy Ghost. I shall only weigh two circumstances in this gift, either whereof both dignifies, and casts a beam of bounty from the giver, into the heart of the receiver, to move him to love.

(1.) One circumstance is, the greatness of the giver: O my soul, how shouldest thou but love Christ, the great emperor of heaven and earth: It was he that gave thee his Spirit, it was he that took of the Spirit which is upon him, (so is the expression of God to Moses, and put it upon thee; and doth not the person of Christ, the dignity of Christ,) enhance the value of the gift? As all gifts are signs of love, so the love of a great personage, and the gifts issuing from such a love, ought more to be accounted than any gifts of any meaner person whatsoever.

(2.) Another circumstance is, the greatness of the gift: this argueth the greatness of the good will; and consequently deserveth a correspondence of affection. Now, what greater gift had Christ in store, than to give his own Spirit? The Spirit proceedeth from him, and is the same essence with himself; the Spirit is the third Person of the true and only Godhead, proceeding from the Father and the Son, and co-eternal, co-equal, and consubstantial with the Father and the Son; this appears by those divine attributes and properties which are attributed to the holy Spirit: as 1. Eternity; *In the beginning God created heaven and earth, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.* 2. Omnipotency; because he, together with the Father and the Son, createth and preserveth all things: *By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens; the Spirit of God hath made me; and all these things worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.* 3. Omnisciency, or the knowledge of all things; *For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.* I might add miracles, and the institution of sacraments, and prophecies, and gifts, and graces, as the effects of his divinity: *I cast out devils* (saith Christ) *by the Spirit of God; and baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Holy Ghost. And the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith. And we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* See now how the holy Spirit is God, co-eternal, co-equal, consubstantial with God the Father, and God the Son; is not this a great gift? Yea, as great a gift as possibly can be given; what can he do more, than to give himself, and to give his Spirit? O the bonds of love that are upon man towards Christ in this respect!

Come, my soul, and take a view of the glory and bounty of Jesus Christ! If thy heart be not all brass and iron, how shouldest thou but chuse to love? If either beauty or bounty, if either majesty or magnificence, can draw thy affection, Christ will have it; for in him is all: O let him be thy all! surely if thou hast any thing besides himself, he is the donor of all, he is the beauty of all, the sum of all, the perfection of all, yea, is the author, preserver, and finisher of all.

Sect. VII.—*Of Joying in Jesus in that respect.*

Let us joy in Jesus as carrying on the great work of our salvation in these particulars; there is not a particular under consideration, but it is the object of a Christian's joy.—

1. How should it heighten my joys, and enlarge my comforts, when I consider that Christ is ascended into glory! By this it is clear that Christ is accepted of the Father for me, or otherwise he should never have been received into heaven: O what joy is in this!

2. How should it heighten my joys, and enlarge my comforts, when I consider that Christ is set down at God's right hand. Now he hath the keys of heaven delivered into his hands; *All power is given unto him in heaven and in earth,* and now he can do what he will: God the Father hath given away (as it were) all his prerogative unto Jesus Christ: *All judgment is committed to the Son, for the Father judgeth no man.* Now he is in a capacity of acting all his love to me in the most glorious way; he is highly advanced, and thereby he hath the advantage to advance me, and to glorify me: O what joy may enter into this poor, dark, disconsolate soul of mine, whilst I think over these glorious passages of Christ in glory!

3. How should it heighten my joys, when I consider that Christ hath sent down his holy Spirit into my heart! O what comfort is this, to know that the Spirit of Christ is my inmate! that my soul is the temple, the house and dwelling, of the Spirit of God! that Christ is in me of a truth, and that not only by the infusion of his grace, but by the indwelling of his Spirit! Christ in his bodily presence went away, but Christ in his Spirit continues still: *Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world:* He is with us, and, which is more, he is in us; *Christ in you, the hope of glory.* Not Christ in sermons which we hear, nor Christ in chapters which we read, nor Christ in sacraments which we receive, but Christ in our hearts by his Spirit, is unto us *the hope of glory.*

And now, O my soul, spread thyself on this great good, Christ's ascension, Christ's session, and Christ's mission of his holy Spirit. There is not any particular here before thee, but it is fuel for joy. O what joy was in heaven when Christ

ascended, and when Christ sat down at God's right-hand, and when Christ sent down the Holy Spirit! Suppose thyself to have been in heaven, when he first entered into it, and when he first sat down at God's right hand, and sent down the Comforter to his saints; was not heaven full of joy? Methinks the very thought of Christ's bright face, and white throne, and Christ's harpers, and heavenly troop, surrounding the throne, and Christ's welcome to his Father, both for himself and all his saints, and his carrying thy name upon his breast before his Father, should fill thy soul as full of joy, as possibly it can hold. O the first-fruits of Emmanuel's land, that lies beyond time and death? O the joys that were in heaven at Christ's first entrance into heaven! O my soul, why dost thou not check thyself, and lay aside thy sad complaints, and forget this earth, and earthly troubles! Why dost thou not look up to Jesus Christ, and rejoice in him who hath done all this for thy salvation? Either the Spirit of God is not thy comforter, or thou canst not but receive comfort in these passages.

Sect. VIII.—*Of Calling on Jesus in that respect.*

Let us call on Jesus: I mean—

1. Let us pray that we may have our part in these transactions; or let us pray for more and more assurance thereof unto our souls, for though we do believe, yet may we not be without our doubts; and in case of doubts, if once we are but assured, what better means than prayer?

2. Praise God for these great transactions of his Son! Are they not mercies, like mountains, lying one upon another, and reaching up to the very heavens? Did not love break out first in a direct line, and as it went along, hath it not wound up itself in such a variety of unthought of discoveries, as that it amazeth men and angels? What! that Jesus Christ should not only act for us here on earth, but also ascend for us into heaven, and sit down there at God's right hand, above the heavens; that all this should be done for us and our salvation, and to that purpose that he should send down his Spirit into our hearts, to prepare us for his glory? Now *bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name: bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.*

Sect. IX.—*Of Conforming to Jesus in that respect.*

Let us conform to Jesus in the aforesaid respect. A serious beholding of Jesus in his ascension, session, mission of his Spirit, is enough to change us into the same image from glory to glory. It was the sweet saying of an experienced saint, *View a glorified Christ, see him as in that relation and condition, and you will soon*

have the sparkles of the same glory on your hearts. Christ is now exalted; he is now in glory at the right-hand of God: O let all our actions be glorious, let all our walking, joys, breathings, be as in glory. I shall not in this transaction lay out many particular conformities to Christ, but gather all into one, which is, heavenly conversation; seek things above, set your affection on things above: Christ is gone up, and Christ is sat down at God's right-hand; and herein if you will conform, let your hearts be in heaven, let your affections be in heaven, let your conversations be in heaven.

In prosecution of this, I shall examine,

1st. What do we mean by our conversation in heaven?

2. Why must our conversation be in heaven?

3. By what means must we come up to this conversation in heaven?

1. By our conversation in heaven, I mean our aim at heaven: as heaven is our home, so our eye is there; whatever we do, our end, our scope, is to fit us for heaven, and to lay in heaven: *We look not at things which are seen, but at things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

By our conversation in heaven, I mean, our communion with Christ in heaven: *Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* As it is among friends that converse together, they act mutually for the comfort one of another; there is a communion, or a mutual acting of the soul upon Christ, and of Christ upon the soul.

By our conversation in heaven, I mean, our affections on heaven, or on Christ in heaven: *Set your affections on things above,* that is, set your desires, loves, hopes, joys, on heavenly things. Our affections are precious things, and are only to be set on precious objects. O what a shame is it to set our affections on the things in this life! Have we not a kingdom, a God, a Christ, a crown, in heaven, to set our affections upon? And shall we set them upon dross, and dung? Are not all our pleasures and vanities base in comparison of Christ? O be not we so base as to set our affections on earthly things, but rather on God and Christ, and this is our heavenly conversation.

By our conversation in heaven, I mean, we carry and behave ourselves in this life as free denizens of the city of heaven: our city, whereof we are citizens, and whereunto we have a right, is in heaven above: in this respect we trade not in trifles, as other men do, but we trade for great things, for high things; we merchandise for goodly pearls, even for God, and for Christ, who sitteth at the right-hand of God. We see now what is meant by our conversation in heaven.

2. Why is the conversation of the saints in heaven?

1. Because they know that the original of their souls came

from God in heaven: the body indeed was of the dust of the ground, but the soul was the breath of God; so it is said of the first man, *God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.* The soul had a more heavenly original than any of the other creatures that are in the world; and when God works grace in the soul, and it begins to know itself, it looks on all things here below as vile and contemptible; it then looks upward, and begins to converse with things suitable to its original.

2. Because their best and choice things are already in heaven. As their Father is in heaven, and their Saviour in heaven, their husband is in heaven, their elder brother is in heaven, and their king is in heaven, their treasure is in heaven, their inheritance is in heaven, their hope is in heaven, their mansion is in heaven, their chief friends are in heaven, their substance is in heaven, their reward is in heaven, their wages are in heaven: and all these things being in heaven, no marvel their conversations be in heaven.

3. Because they are going towards heaven even whiles yet they are on earth. If the nobleman do once know his condition, and begin his travel homeward towards his father's court, will he not, every morning that he rises, converse with them that come from his father to conduct him home? Doth it not do him good to hear any man speak of his father's country? Is it not in his thoughts, in his talk, in his eye, at every step? O my soul, if thou art indeed travelling towards heaven, how shouldst thou but have it in thy motions, affections, and conversations?

3d. By what means should we come to have our conversation in heaven?

1. Let us watch opportunities for heavenly exercises. God now by his ministers calls, *Come ye to the waters, come buy and eat; come, buy wine and milk without money; come to me, and your souls shall live.* Why, *now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation:* whilst ministers call, and we live under the droppings of the word; these are opportunities from heaven: O then, he that never prayed, let him pray; and he that never heard, let him hear: the Lord is now near to us, Christ Jesus is calling, and mercy is entreating, and love is beseeching, and wisdom is crying after us; O lay hold on these opportunities for heavenly exercises, and then we shall come to heavenly conversations.

2. Take heed of resting in the formality of duties. Many souls that have enlightenings of conscience, dare not but take opportunities for heavenly duties; but then comes in the temptations of the devil, and corruptions of their own hearts, and then they say, *Now the duty is done, and what needs more?* Alas! It is not *what have we done?* but, *where have we been?* What, have our souls been in heaven, with God and with Christ? Have

we had communion with the Father, and with the Son, in our duties? O take heed of formality; it will exceedingly hinder our conversation in heaven! O keep our eye still upon our heart! ask in duty, what affections have been? How much are we got nearer heaven thereby? And by this means we shall come to an heavenly conversation.

2. Look up unto Jesus as hanging on the cross, and as sitting on the throne; this is the apostle's rule: *Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right-hand of the throne of God.* These two are the objects of a Christian's look, who studies an heavenly conversation, viz. Christ's cross, and Christ's session: by the cross he is author, and by the throne he is the finisher, of our faith; in the first is set down his love to us, in the second is set down our hope of him: come then, and settle your thoughts and looks on this blessed object; a sight of Christ's cross, but especially of Christ's throne, is a blessed means to wean us from the world, and to raise our affections to things above, yea, to form our conversation towards heaven.

4. Let us wait for the appearing of Jesus Christ: *Our conversation is in heaven* (saith the apostle) *from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.* Where his expectations are, there a man's conversation will be; if we expect ere long that the Lord Jesus will appear in glory, and that we shall see him, not with other, but with the same eyes, the very waiting for these things will help our conversation to be heavenward. Certainly the day is coming, when Jesus Christ shall come with his angels in his glory, and then shall the bodies of the saints shine gloriously before the face of God, and Jesus Christ: O the wonder of this day! the glory of Christ shall then darken the glory of the sun, and moon, and stars; but my body shall not be darkened, but rather it shall shine like the glorious body of Christ Jesus.

5. Let us observe the drawings and movings of the Spirit, and follow his dictates: to this purpose Christ ascended, and sat down at God's right-hand, and sent down the holy Spirit, that the Holy Ghost being come down, he might do his office, in bringing our souls towards salvation; and if ever our souls get above this earth, and get acquaintance in heaven, it is the Spirit of God that must be the chariot of Elijah, yea the very living principle, by which we must move and ascend; O then take heed of quenching its motions, or resisting its workings. Take we heed of grieving our guide, or of knocking off the chariot wheels of his Holy Spirit. We little think how much the life of grace, and the happiness of souls, doth depend upon our ready and cordial obedience to the Spirit of God: when he forbids us, and we will go on, when he tells us which is the way, and we will

not regard; no wonder if we are strangers to an heavenly conversation; if we will not follow the Spirit, how should it lead us to heaven, or bring our hearts unto the presence of God? . O learn we this lesson, and let not only the motions of our bodies, but the very thoughts of our hearts, be at the Spirit's beck! if we cherish these motions, and hearken to the Spirit, O what a help should we find to this heavenly conversation!

LOOKING UNTO JESUS,

IN HIS INTERCESSION.

BOOK VIII.

CHAP. I.

SECT. I.—*What the Intercession of Christ is.*

WE have spoken of Christ's entrance into heaven, and of his immediate actings after his entrance there; that transaction which yet remains, and will remain until his coming again, is, his intercession for the saints. In these actings of Christ in heaven, if we follow him, we must go from glory to glory: no sooner come we out of one room of glory, but presently we step into another. One would think enough had been said already of the glory of Christ, and our glory in Christ; who would not willingly sit down under the shadow of this happiness, and go no further? But yet this is not all; so thick and fast doth the glory of Christ break in upon us. O what a blessed thing is it to be looking up to Jesus Christ! Saints might do nothing else but ravish their hearts with the diversity of heavenly light and comfort, which breaks forth from the bosom of Jesus Christ. Here is now another mystery, as great and amazing as the former, which springs out before our eyes in this transaction of Christ's intercession.

And in prosecution of this, as in the former, I shall first lay down the object, and secondly direct you how to look upon it. The object is Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation in his intercession: In ordering of which, I shall examine these particulars;—

1. What is this intercession of Christ?
2. To whom is Christ's intercession directed, and for whom?
3. What agreement betwixt Christ's intercession, and the intercession of the high priests of old, and what difference?
4. What are the properties of this intercession?
5. Wherein it doth more especially consist?
6. How powerful Christ's intercessions are with God?
7. What are the reasons of this great transaction of Christ's intercession for his people?

1. What is the intercession of Christ? Some define it thus: *Christ's intercession is that part of his priestly office, whereby Christ is advocate, and entreater of God the Father, for the faithful.* I shall give it thus: *Christ's intercession is his gracious will, fervently and immoveably desiring, that for the perpetual virtue of his sacrifice, all his members might, both for their persons and duties, be accepted of the Father.* 1. I call the intercession of Christ his own gracious will; for we must not imagine that Christ, in his intercession, prostrates himself on his knees before his Father's throne, uttering some submissive form of words; that is not beseeming the majesty of him that sits at God's right-hand: when he was but yet on earth, the substance of his request for his saints ran thus, *Father, I will, that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am;* and much more, now he is in heaven, is this the form of his intercession—Father, I will this. 2. The foundation of Christ's intercession, is the death of Christ; and hence we make two parts of Christ's oblation; the one expiatory, when Christ suffered upon the cross: the other presentatory, when he doth appear in heaven before God for us: the one was finished on earth, when Christ suffered within the gate; the other is performed in heaven, now Christ is within the city; the one was a sacrifice indeed, the other is not so much a sacrifice, as the commemoration of a sacrifice; the first was an act of humiliation, this latter is an act of glory: the first was performed once for all, this latter is done continually; the first was for the obtaining redemption, and this latter is for the application of redemption.

The matter interceded for, is, that all the saints and their service might find acceptance with God: first, Christ's intercession is for our persons, and then Christ's intercession is for our works; by Christ's intercession is Christ's satisfaction applied to our persons, and by consequence the defect of our duties is covered and removed; and both we and our works are approved and accepted of God the Father.

Christ intercedes, according to both natures. 1. According to his humanity; partly by appearing before his Father in heaven, and partly by desiring our salvation. Christ is entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:—And I say not unto you that I will pray, or desire the Father for you, for the Father himself loveth you. 2. According to his Deity;

partly by applying the merit of his death, and partly by willing the salvation of his saints; and as the effect thereof, by making requests in the hearts of the saints with sighs unspeakable. Elect, through sanctification of the Spirit, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ;—this sprinkling is the applying of the blood of Jesus, and that is an act of intercession. Again, Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am: he desires as man, but he wills as God; and as the effect of this, he gives the Spirit. The Spirit itself makes intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered. But what are the intercessions of the Spirit, to the intercessions of Christ? I answer, much every way; the Spirit's intercessions are as the effect, and Christ's intercessions are as the cause; the Spirit's intercessions are as the echo, and Christ's intercessions are as the first voice; the Spirit intercedes for men in and by themselves, but Christ intercedes in his own person; there is a dependence of the Spirit's intercession in us, upon Christ's intercession in himself. First, Christ by his intercession applies his satisfaction made, and then sends down his holy Spirit into our hearts, to help our infirmities, and to teach us what to pray, and how to pray as we ought. Now this he doth as God, for who shall give a commission to the Spirit of God, but God himself?

Sect. II.—*To whom is Christ's Intercession directed, and for whom?*

To whom is Christ's intercession directed? I answer, Immediately to God the Father; *If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.* In the work of intercession, are three persons: a party offended, a party offending, and the intercessor distinct from them both: the party offended is God the Father; the party offending is sinful man; and the intercessor, distinct from them both, is Jesus Christ. I deny not but Christ's intercession is made to the whole Trinity, but yet immediately and directly to the first person, and in him to the rest,—i. e. *three persons, and but one God.*

This intercession is made, in one sense, for the world: so Christ, upon the cross, prayed for the bloody Jews; *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* But in a particular manner for all and every faithful man. As the high priest went into the sanctuary with the names of the twelve tribes upon his breast, so Christ entered into the holiest of all, with the names of all believers upon his heart, and still he carries them upon his breast, and presents his will and desire unto his Father for them; nor doth he only intercede in general, but whatever thy name is, John, Peter, Thomas, Mary, Martha, if thou art a believer, Christ prays for thee: it is our common practice to

desire the prayers one of another; but O, who would not have a share in the prayers of Jesus Christ? Why, certainly, if thou believest in Christ, Christ prays for thee.

SECT. III.—*What Agreement there is betwixt Christ's Intercessions and the Intercessions of the High-priests of old, and what Difference.*

What agreement is there betwixt the intercessions of Christ, and the intercessions of the high-priests of old? Among the Jews, in the times of the old Testament, they had an high-priest, who was in all things to stand betwixt God and them. Now as the Jews had their high-priest to intercede for them, so the Lord Jesus was to be the high-priest of our profession, and to intercede for us; it will therefore give some light to this doctrine of intercession, if we compare these two: and first, consider what agreement betwixt Christ and the high-priests of old; betwixt Christ's intercession, and the high-priest's intercessions?

1. Christ, and the high-priests of old, agreed in name; not only they, but Christ himself is called an High-priest: *We have such an high-priest, who is set down at the right-hand of the majesty on high.*

2. They agreed in office; that consisted of two parts, oblation and presentation: first, they offered a sacrifice; and secondly, they presented it in the holy of holies, with prayer and intercession, unto God; the one was done without, the other within the holy of holies; and in answer thereunto, there are two distinct parts of Christ's priesthood. (1.) The offering of himself a sacrifice upon the cross. (2.) The carrying of himself, and of his blood, into the holy of holies, or into the heaven of heavens; where he appears and prays in the force of that blood: and indeed this part of his priesthood is of the two the more eminent; and therefore it is held forth to us in the types of both these two orders of priesthood that were before him, and figures of him, both that of Aaron and Melchisedech. [1.] This was typified in that Levitical priesthood of Aaron and his fellows: the highest service of that office, was the going into the holy of holies, and making an atonement there; yea, this was the height of the high-priest's honour, that he did this alone, and it constituted the difference betwixt him as he was high-priest, and other priests; for they killed and offered the sacrifices without, as well as he; but only the high-priest was to approach the holy of holies with blood, and that but once a year. [2.] This was typified by Melchisedech's priesthood, which the apostle argues to have been much more excellent than any of Aaron's, in as much as Levi, Aaron's father, paid tithes to this Melchisedech in Abraham's loins; now Melchisedech was his type, not so

much in respect of his oblation, or offering sacrifice, as in respect of his continual presentation and intercession in heaven; and therefore the same clause, *for ever,* still comes in when Melchisedech is named; *Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedech.* Here then is the agreement betwixt Christ, and the high-priests of old: in respect of name, both were priests; and in respect of office, both had their oblations, and presentations, or intercessions with God in glory.

3. In the point of intercession, they agree in these particulars:—

1. The high-priests of old, usually once a year, went into the most holy place within the veil; and so is Christ, our great high-priest, passed into the heavens within the veil, even into the holy of holies.

2. The high-priests of old had a plate of pure gold upon their foreheads, which was *to bear the iniquity of the holy things, that they might be accepted before the Lord;* and so doth Christ bear the iniquity of our holy things. Spiritual Christians! here is your comfort, you are not able to perform any duty to God, but there is a great deal of sin in the same; you cannot hear, nor pray, nor confer, nor meditate, without much sin; but Christ bears all these sins, even the iniquity of your holy things, and he presents your persons and prayers, without the least spot, to the Father; he is *the angel of the covenant, that stands at the altar, having a golden censer with much incense, to offer it with the prayers of his saints,* and so they are acceptable before the Lord.

3. The Jewish high-priests *bore the names of the children of Israel on a breast-plate upon their hearts, for a memorial before the Lord;* and so doth Christ, our great high-priest, bear the names of his people upon his heart before the Lord continually.

1. In presenting them to his Father without spot, as righteous in his own righteousness: *Christ loved the church, that he might present it to his Father, and, in him, to himself, a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

2. In remembering them: *The righteous shall be had in continual remembrance;* this is the soul's comfort in a time of desertion, or in an evil day; if any cry out, as sometimes David did, *How long wilt thou forget me, Lord? for ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?* Let such a one remember, that Christ's redeemed ones are upon his heart, and he cannot forget them. *But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me*: O no! *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee.*

3. In loving them: they are near and dear unto him, he hath set them as a seal upon his heart; so was the prayer of the spouse, *Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm;* and

then it follows, *for love is strong as death.* Christ hath an entire love to his saints, he died for them, and now he intercedes for them; he keeps them close to his heart, and there is none shall pluck them out of his hand. Thus far of the agreement betwixt Christ's intercessions and the high-priests, of old.

The difference betwixt Christ and them, and betwixt Christ's intercessions and their intercessions, may appear in these particulars:—

1. The high-priests then were but for a time, but Christ is a *priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedech. Melchisedech* (saith the apostle) *was without father, without mother, without descent, neither having beginning of days, nor end of life;* that is, as far as it is known: and so is Christ without a father on earth, and without a mother in heaven; without beginning, and without end; he abides a priest perpetually, even to the end of the world; yea, and the virtue of his priesthood is infinitely beyond all time, even for ever and ever.

2. The high-priest then entered only into that place that was typically holy, but Christ is entered into that place which is properly holy; he is entered into the heavens.

3. The high-priests then did always intercede for the people; only once a year the high-priest entered into the holy of holies, but our great high-priest is ascended into the holy of holies, never to put off his princely, priestly garments. Nor does he only once a year sprinkle the mercy-seat with his sacrifice, but every day; he lives for ever to intercede. O what comfort is this to a poor dejected soul! He intercedeth ever, till he shall finish thy salvation; the smoke of his incense ascends for ever without intermission.

4. The high-priests then interceded not for sins of presumption: If a man sinned ignorantly, there was indeed a sacrifice and intercession for him, but *if a man sinned presumptuously, he was to be cut off from among his people;* no sacrifice, no intercession, by the high-priest then: but we have such an high-priest as makes intercession for all sins; every sin, though it boil up to blasphemy, (so it be not against the Holy Ghost,) shall, by virtue of Christ's intercession, be forgiven: *In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness,* (i. e.) for sins of all sorts: *Verily I say unto you, all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men* (i. e.) scarlet sins, or crimson sins; sins of the deepest dye, shall by Christ's intercession be done away; the voice of his blood speaks better things than the blood of Abel; it intercedes for the abolition of bloody sins.

5. The high-priests then interceded not without all these materials, viz. a temple, an altar, a sacrifice, a censer of burning coals taken off the altar, a putting the incense upon the fire, that the cloud of the incense might cover the mercy-seat, a

sprinkling the mercy-seat with the blood of the bullock and of the goat: but Jesus Christ in his intercessions now needs none of these materials; but rather he himself, and his own merits, are instead of all: as, 1. He is the temple; *Destroy this temple,* (saith Christ) *and I will build it again in three days:* it was destroyed; and God found it an acceptable sacrifice, and smelt in it a sweet savour, as in a temple. 2. He is the altar, according to his Deity; for as the altar sanctifies the gift, so doth the Godhead sanctify the manhood. 3. He is the sacrifice properly, according to the manhood; for although, by communication of properties, the blood of the sacrifice is called the *blood of God,* yet properly the human soul and flesh of Christ, was the whole burnt-offering roasted in the fire of his Father's wrath.

6. His merits are the cloud of incense, for so the angel; Christ is said *to have a golden censer, and much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar which was before the throne; and the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God, out of the angel's hand:* the merits of Christ are so mingled with the prayers of his saints, that they perfume their prayers, and so they find acceptance with God his Father. We see now the difference betwixt Christ's intercessions and the intercessions of the high-priests of old.

Sect. IV.—*What the Properties of this Intercession of Christ are?*

What are the properties of this intercession of Jesus Christ? I answer:—1. It is heavenly and glorious; and that appears in these particulars:—

1. Christ doth not fall upon his knees before his Father, as in the days of his humiliation; for that is not agreeable to that glory he hath received; he only presents his pleasure to his Father, that he may thereto put his seal and consent. 2. Christ doth not pray out of private charity, as the saints pray one for another in this life, but out of public office of mediation: *There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.* 3. Christ prays not out of humility, but out of authority, which is the desiring of a thing, so as withal he hath a right of bestowing it, as well as desiring it. 4. Christ prays not merely as an advocate, but as a propitiation too; Christ's Spirit is an advocate, but only Christ is advocate and propitiation: Christ's Spirit is our advocate on earth, but only Christ in his person applies his merits in heaven, and furthers the cause of our salvation with his Father in heaven. In every of these respects we may see Christ's intercession is heavenly and glorious.

2. It is ever effectual and prevailing: as he hath a power to intercede for us, so he hath a power to confer that upon us for which he intercedes: *I will pray the Father, and he shall give*

you another Comforter. If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. If Christ prayed on earth, he was ever heard; but if Christ prayed in heaven, we may be sure the Father ever heareth and answereth there: when Christ as man prayed for himself, he was heard in that which he feared; but now Christ as mediator, praying for us, he is ever heard in the very particular which he desireth.

3. It is, of all other the transactions of Christ till the very end of the world, the most perfect and consummate; without it all the other parts of Christ's mediatorship would have been to little purpose. As the sacrifices under the law had not been of force, had not the high-priest entered into the holy place to appear there, and to present the blood there unto the Lord; so all that ever Christ did or suffered upon earth, had been ineffectual unto us, had he not entered into heaven, *to appear there in the presence of God for us.* In his life and death Christ was the meritorious cause, but by his intercession Christ is the applying cause, of our souls' salvation.

Sect. V.—*Wherein the Intercession of Christ consists?*

Wherein more especially doth the intercession of Jesus Christ consist? I answer, In these particulars:

1. Christ's intercession consists in the presenting of his person for us: he himself went up to heaven, and presented himself; the apostle calls this, *an appearing for us: Christ is not entered into the holy place made with hands, but into heaven, now to appear in the presence of God for us.* I believe there is an emphasis in the word *appearing for us.* But how appears he for us? I answer; 1. In a public manner: whatsoever he did in this kind, he did it openly and publicly; he appears for us in the presence of God the Father; he appears for us in the presence of his saints and angels; heaven's eyes are all upon him in his appearing for us. 2. He appears for us a mediator, he stands in the middle betwixt God and us; hence it is, that he is God-man, that he might be a mediator betwixt God and man. 3. He appears for us as a sponsor and a pledge: surely it is a comfort for a man to have a friend at court, that may own him, and appear for him; but if this friend be both a mediator and surety, a mediator to request for him, and a surety to engage for him, O what comfort is this! thus Christ appeared in every respect; he is a mediator to request for us; and he is a surety to engage for us; as Paul was for Onesimus, a mediator, *I beseech thee for my son Onesimus;* and a sponsor, *if he hath wronged thee, or owe thee ought, put that on my account, I will repay it.* So is Jesus Christ for his saints: he is *the mediator of a better covenant,* Heb. viii. 6. And he *is a surety of a better testament,* Heb. vii. xii. 4. He appears as a solicitor, to present and promote the desires and

requests of his saints, in such a way as that they may find acceptance with his Father.—5. He appears as an advocate: *If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.* An advocate is more than a solicitor; an advocate is one that is of council with another, and pleadeth his case in open court; and such an advocate is Jesus Christ unto his people. 1. He is of counsel with them; that is one of the titles given him by the prophet Isaiah, *Wonderful Counsellor;* he counsels them by his word and Spirit. 2. He pleads for them, and this he doth in the high court of heaven, at the bar of God's own justice; there he pleads their case, and answereth all the accusations that are brought in by Satan, or their own consciences. But of this anon.—6. He appears as a public agent, or ambassador: what that is, some tell us in these particulars; 1. His work is to continue peace; and surely this is Christ's work, *He is our peace,* (saith the apostle,) that is, the author of our peace; he purchased our peace, and he maintains our peace with God; to this purpose he sits at God's right-hand, to intercede for us, and to maintain the peace and union betwixt God and us; *therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* 2. His work is to maintain intercourse and correspondency; and surely this is Christ's work also: *By him we have an access unto the Father. In him we have boldness, and access with confidence.* The word *access* doth not only signify coming to God in prayer, but all that resort and communion which we have with God, as united by faith to Jesus Christ; according to that, *Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.* This benefit have all believers, in and by Christ; they come to God by him, they have free commerce and intercourse in heaven.—3. His work is to reconcile and take up differences; and this is Christ's work also: *he maketh intercession for the transgressors;* he takes up the differences that our transgressions make betwixt God and us.—4. His work is to procure the welfare of the people or state where he negociates; and this is no less Christ's work, for he seeks the welfare of his people, he sits at God's right-hand to intercede for them, and, commending their estate to his Father, he makes it his request, that his members may have *a continual supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,* that they may be strengthened in temptations, confirmed in tribulations, delivered from every evil work, enabled to every good duty, and finally preserved unto his heavenly kingdom.

2. Christ's intercession consists in the presenting of his wounds, death, and blood, as a public satisfaction for the debt of sin, and as a public price for the purchase of our glory.

We read in the law, that *when the high-priest went within the veil, he took the blood of the bullock, and sprinkled it with his finger upon the mercy-seat east-ward; and before the mercy-seat,*

he sprinkled the blood with his finger seven times. Surely these were *patterns of things to be done in the heavens. Christ, that was slain without the gate,* carried his own blood into the holy of holies, or into the heaven of heavens, for, *by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us:* And thither come, he sprinkles it, as it were, upon the mercy-seat, *(i. e.)* he applies it, and obtains mercy by it. By the blood of Christ, God's mercy and justice are reconciled in themselves, and reconciled unto us. Christ's blood was shed upon earth, but Christ's blood is sprinkled now he is in heaven; heaven is all besprinkled, as the mercy-seat in the holy of holies was; the earth is all besprinkled, as the altar out of the holy of holies was. Heaven and earth are all besprinkled with the blood of Jesus; so that the saints, and the people of God, are no where, but their doors, and their posts, and their houses, (I mean their bodies and souls,) are all besprinkled with the blood of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world: why, this is that *blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.* Mark that: Christ's blood hath a tongue; it speaks, it cries, it prays, it intercedes;—Christ's blood crieth out, it makes a loud cry, it fills heaven and earth with the noise; yea, the Lord's ears are so filled with it, that it drowns all other sounds, and rings continually in his ears.

I will not say, that the very blood which Christ shed on the cross, is now in heaven, nor that it speaks in heaven; these cryings are merely metaphorical; yet this I maintain as real and proper, that the power, merit, and virtue of Christ's blood is presented by our Saviour to his Father, both as a public satisfaction for our sins, and as a public price for the purchase of our glory.

3. Christ's intercession consists in the presenting of his will, his request, for us, grounded upon the virtue of his glorious merits: *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.* This was a piece of Christ's prayer while yet he was on earth; and it is a summary of Christ's intercession, which now he makes for us in his glory; he prayed on earth, as he meant to pray for us when he came to heaven; he hints at this in the beginning of his prayer, for he speaks as if all his work had been done on earth, and as if then he were beginning his work in heaven: *I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do; and now, O Father, glorify thou me with thy ownself, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*

4. Christ's intercession consists in the presenting our persons, in his own person, to his Father; so that now God cannot look upon the Son, but he must behold the saints in his Son; and this was shadowed out by that act of the high-priest, who went into the holy of holies, with the *names of all the tribes of Israel*

upon his shoulders, and upon his breasts; and this the apostle speaks yet more plainly; *by him we have an access unto the Father, and in him we have boldness and access with confidence.* We find in the law, *that Aaron was to put two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod, for stones of memorial unto the children of Israel; and so Aaron was to bear the names before the Lord upon his two shoulders, for a memorial.* And again; *Aaron was to bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he went into the holy place for a memorial before the Lord continually.* Here we find the names of the twelve tribes of Israel engraven in stones, which the high-priest usually took with him into the holy place, when he appeared before the Lord; a lively type of Christ's intercession, who being entered into the heavens, there appears in our behalf, and he presents our persons to his Father, bearing them (as it were) upon his shoulders, and upon his heart; thus Christ takes our persons into heaven, and represents them in his own person to his Father. Secondly, we find in the gospel a gracious promise, that *by Christ we have access unto the Father, and in Christ we have access with confidence.* Where the word for *access,* signifies properly a manuduction, or leading by the hand to God; an introduction, or bringing into God; alluding to the custom in princes' courts, where none may come into the presence chamber, unless they be led, or brought in, by some favourite or courtier there; thus none may have access into the presence of God, unless they are brought in by this favourite of heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ, whose very office it is to bring men unto God; he takes us by the hand, and leads us to the Father.

5. Christ's intercession consists in the presenting our duties unto God. Not only doth he take our persons, and leads them into the presence of God, but together with our persons he presents all our services in his own person. Alas! *all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags,* but Christ draws out the evil of duty, and failings in duty, before he will present them unto God. And he observes what good there is in any of our duties or performances, and with that he mingles his own prayers and intercessions, and presents all as one work interwoven or mingled together to God the Father. It is Jesus, and only Jesus, that presents our prayers, and sanctifies our prayers, and mingles our prayers, with his merits, and so makes them penetrate sweetly before his God.

6. Christ's intercession consists in presenting our plea, or answer, in heaven, to all those accusations that are brought in against us. And this I take to be the meaning of the challenge, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God htat justifies, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right-hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.* Christ intercedes; and who shall condemn? Christ takes off all accusations; and who

shall charge? if sin, or Satan, shall dare to accuse, our Jesus is ready, at God's right-hand, to answer all. And in this respect he is truly called our advocate: *If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.* We have an advocate that pleads for us, that answers for us; that in a way of equity (grounding all upon his own merits) calls for the pardon of our sins, and for the salvation of our souls.

SECT. VI.—*How powerful Christ's Intercessions are with God?*

How powerful are Christ's intercessions with God? This will appear, if we consider:—

1. That Christ is our great high-priest to God; *We have such an high-priest, who is set down at the right-hand of the majesty on high:* now, it was the way of God to lend his ear in an especial manner to the high-priests; *Samuel called unto the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day. And all the people said to Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God. And Samuel said unto the people, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you.* Now such an high-priest as this, (though with far more eminency,) is Christ to God; he intercedes for his people, *(God forbid that he should ever cease to pray for his people,)* and he hath God's ear in an especial manner; if ever God lend his ear to any one, it must needs be to this high-priest, because of his office to intercede betwixt God and his people. Christ stands next to God, as our great high-priest; and therefore he must needs prevail with God in every petition he puts up for us.

2. That Christ was called to this office by God, his Father: *Christ glorified not himself, to be made an high-priest;* no, no: but *he was called of God, as Aaron was;* it was God the Father that designed him to it, and that furnished him for it, and that invested him in it: *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedech.* Now to what purpose should God call him to this office, but especially to intercede for them, to whom God was willing to communicate salvation? Surely the Father is engaged to hear the Son, in that he is an high-priest to God, and called to his office by God.

3. That Christ is God's Son; and that is more than God's high-priest; he is his beloved Son, his Son that never gave him the least offence; sure then when he comes and intercedes for a man, he is most like to speed; if a child do but cry, *My Father, My Father,* he may prevail very much, especially with a Father who is tender-hearted: Jesus Christ is the precious Son of God the Father; and God the Father is a dear and kind-hearted Father; how then should the intercessions of Christ but be most powerful with God? All the relations of son and father in the world, are but a shadow of this relation betwixt God and Christ;

it is so near, that though they are two, yet Christ speaks of them as one, *I and my Father are one;* if then the Father should deny him any thing, he should deny himself, or cease to be one with his Son; which can never be. Christ is God's Son, his natural Son, his beloved Son: *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,* saith God. O then how prevalent must Christ's intercession be with God!

4. That Christ is God himself: how powerful in this respect, must his intercessions be unto the Father: it is true, that Christ is another person, but one and the same God with the Father; Christ is the very essential, substantial representation of God himself; Christ is the very self of God, both God sending and God sent; Christ is the fellow of God: *Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow;* nay, Christ is God, and not another God, but one God; *God of God, light of light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made.* Can we imagine now that God himself should be denied any boon of God himself? If God sometimes spoke to his servants, *Ask of me, command ye me, concerning all the work of mine hands;* will not God much more say to Christ, *Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession?* We have brought it now so near, that if God be God; and God be omnipotent, that he can do, and can have, whatsoever he pleases; then Christ being one God with his Father, he must needs prevail.

Sect. VII.—*Of the Reason of Christ's Intercession.*

What are the reasons of this great transaction of Christ's intercession for his people? I answer:

1. It is the Father's will that it should be so; he called Jesus Christ to his office, the command of God is upon Jesus Christ; *Ask what thou wilt for thy redeemed ones, I willingly engage myself to grant, only it is my pleasure thou shouldest ask:* as sometimes he said to the house of Israel, *I the Lord have spoken, and I will do it; notwithstanding, I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them:* so saith God to Christ, *I the Lord have spoken, and will do it; only, my Son, I will be inquired of by thee.* I look upon this as the main reason of Christ's intercession; *Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight.*

2. It is Christ's own inclination to do this office. What is the will of the Father, is the will of Christ; so that what the Father would have Christ own, he cannot but own; for the same Spirit is in Christ, which is in the Father, and in the self-same measure. As God is captivated with love towards all captives, so am I, saith Christ. As God would have all be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth, so would I too, saith Christ;

the same bottomless sea of love that fluctuates in my Father's breast, is in my breast; *for I and my Father are one.*

3. It is Christ's love to his saints; he intercedes for them for ever. They are in covenant with Jesus Christ, and therefore in nearer relation than any others; hence it is, that they are called the portion of God, the treasure of God, the peculiar people of God, those that God and Christ satisfy themselves in, those that God and Christ have set their hearts on, the children of God the Father, the very spouse and bride of God the Son, in some respect nearer than the angels themselves, for the angels are not so married to Christ in a mystical union, as God's people are. Now, is it any wonder, that those who are so very dear to Christ, should be in the prayers of Christ? If they were so much in his heart, that he shed his blood for them, will he not now intercede for them? O yes! to this end he carries them on his breast or heart, as near as may be, that they may be in a continual remembrance before the Lord for ever; his very love compels him to intercede for them.

4. It is Christ's compassion that causeth intercession: *Christ is such an high-priest,* (saith the apostle) *as cannot but be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.* When he was on earth, he felt our infirmities, frailties, miseries: and as a man that hath felt the stone, or gout, or fever, or especially that hath felt soul troubles, cannot but compassionate those that are in the like condition; so Christ having had the experience of our outward and inward sufferings, cannot but compassionate us; and hence it is (his very compassion is moving) that he intercedes to his Father in our behalf. It is observed, that the very office of the high-priest, was to sympathize with the people of God; only in the case of the death of his kindred, he was not, as others, to sympathize or mourn: but Jesus Christ goes beyond all the high-priests that ever were before him; he doth fully sympathize with us, not in some, but in all conditions; *In all our afflictions he is afflicted.* I believe Christ hath carried a man's heart up with him to heaven: and though there be no passions in him, as he is God; yet the flower, the excellency, of all these passions are infinitely in him, as he is God; he striketh, and trieth, and yet he pitieth; when Ephraim bemoaneth himself, God replies, *Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? For since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still, therefore my bowels are troubled for him.* Surely there's a violence of heavenly passion in Christ's heart, as God-man, which makes him to break out into prayer to God, and into compassions towards men. O that tempted souls would consider this! It may be Christ is giving you a cup of tears and blood to drink, but who knows what bowels, what turning of heart, what motions of compassion, are in Jesus Christ all the while? Those who feel the fruit of

Christ's intercession, know this; and cannot but subscribe to this truth. O ye of little faith, why do ye doubt of Christ's bowels? Is he not our compassionate high-priest? he is touched, saith the apostle, with the feeling of infirmities; it is an allusion to the rolled and moved bowels of God, in Jeremiah xxxi. 20. Christ in heaven is burning and flaming in compassion towards his weak ones; and therefore he pleads, intercedes, and prays to God for them.

CHAP. II.

Sect. I.—*Of Knowing Jesus as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation, in his Intercession.*

Let us know Jesus carrying on this great work of our salvation, in his intercession. Ever since his ascension into heaven, he hath been doing this work; it is a work already of above sixteen hundred years; and summer and winter, night and day, Christ hath been still praying, still interceding; Christ's love hath no vacation, no cessation at all; yea, even now whilst you read this, Christ is acting as an advocate for you, Christ hath your names engraven, as a seal on his heart; and standing right opposite to the eye of his Father, the first opening of the eyelids of God, is terminated upon the breast of Jesus Christ; is not this worth the knowledge? O my soul, leave off thy vain studies; if they do not conduce to the right understanding of this, they are not worth the while; what is it for an Aristotle to be praised where he is not, and to be damned where he is? O the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ! Such a knowledge (if true) is no less than saving. Come, study his intercession in all the former particulars; only remember this, that in Christ's intercession are many secrets, which we must never know on this side heaven: O take heed of entering into this labyrinth, without the clew of the word; above all, desire the guidance of the Spirit to enlighten thy darkness, and whatever thou knowest, *know it still for thyself!*

Sect. II.—*Of Considering Jesus in that respect.*

Let us consider Jesus carrying on this work of our salvation, in his intercession; is it not as incense, a sweet odour with God himself? And shall not each thought of it be sweet to us? Come, let us be serious in this duty; and that we may do it thoroughly, let us consider it in these particulars:

1. Consider the nature of Christ's intercession: what is it,

but the gracious will of Christ, fervently desiring, that for the virtue of his death and sacrifice, thy person and performances might be accepted of God? As Christ on earth gave himself to the death, even to the death of the cross, for the abolition of sin; so now in heaven he prays the Father, *by his agony and bloody sweat, by his cross and passion, by his death and sacrifice,* that thy sins may be pardoned, thy service accepted, and thy soul saved. This is the will of Christ, even thy justification, sanctification, and salvation; accordingly he represents his will, 'Father, I will that all those privileges flowing from my death, may be conferred on such a person; such a soul is now considering my intercession, and my will is, that his meditation may find acceptance with God.' O what workings would be in thy heart and spirit, if thou didst but consider that Christ even now were speaking his will, that thy person and duty may both find acceptance, and be well-pleasing with God!

2. Consider the person that intercedes for thee: it is Christ in both natures; it is thy mediator, one betwixt God and man: in this respect thou mayest consider him as one indifferent, and equally inclining to either party; *A mediator is not of one,* saith the apostle: Christ indifferently partook of both natures, godhead and manhood, that so he might be fit to stand in the gap between his Father and us.

3. Consider the person to whom Christ intercedes: is it not to his Father? Thou art sure to speed well, O my soul, for God is the Father of thy intercessor. If I had a suit to some majesty, and the prince would but mediate, I might hope to speed; Christ is God's prince (as I may call him) and in respect of us, *the first begotten of many brethren;* and herein is thy rejoicing, that the party offended is Christ's own Father, and fathers cannot be cruel to their own dear children.

4. Consider the persons for whom Christ intercedes: it is for all believers, and in particular for thee. O that ever the world, or flesh, or devil, should steal this meditation out of my heart! O that ever I should forget that Christ is gone to heaven, that he is entered into the holy of holies, and that he carries my name into the presence of God the Father! I speak the same to thee that readest: if thou art a believer, there is no doubt but Christ is speaking to his Father in thy behalf; he can no more forget thee in his intercessions, than a mother can forget her sucking child. *Look up to Jesus,* and never leave looking, till thou spiest thy own name writ on his heart.

5. Consider the agreement and difference between Christ's intercessions, and the intercessions of the high-priests of old: they did both intercede, but Christ is more faithful than ever high-priest was; Christ is more compassionate than ever high-priest was; and hence it is that he hath the title of πολυσπλαγχνος, *One of many commiserations:* all is mercy, and love, and sweet-

ness, and more than motherly affection, that comes from Christ. O my soul, why shouldest thou say with Israel, *My way is hidden from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over by my God?* as if Jesus Christ had left thee out of the count of his people, and out of the roll of those whom he is to look after. No, no; he is a faithful and merciful priest; far above all the high-priests of the old testament; and if they were so careful not to leave out of their breast-plate one name of all the twelve tribes, how much more careful is Christ not to leave out thy name in his intercession?

6. Consider the properties of Christ's intercession: is it not heavenly and glorious, effectual and prevailing? O give me the intercession of Christ above all the intercessions of men or angels. I know the saints on earth pray mutually one for another, but they pray not in their own names, or for their own merits, but in the name and for the merits of Jesus Christ: and as for the saints and angels in heaven, Cyprian and Jerome seem to grant, that they pray for the state of the church militant; but if so, they do it only out of charity, as brethren, not of office, as mediators; such an intercession as this, so heavenly, so effectual, is proper only for Christ. I would be glad of the prayers of every saint upon earth; but above all let me have a property in those prayers and intercessions that are proper only to Christ, such as are heavenly, glorious, and effectual.

7. Consider the particulars wherein more especially Christ's intercession consists: is it not in presenting of his person, blood, prayers? is it not in the presenting of our persons, performances, pleas or answers to the accusations of Satan? Men little think how busy our mediator, sponsor, solicitor, advocate, is now in heaven for us; men little think that Christ is appearing, and his blood is crying, and his prayers are ascending, and his robe of righteousness is covering us, and the iniquity of our holy things: O my soul, look up, consider Jesus thy Saviour in these respects! I am persuaded, if thou didst but know, if thou couldest but see, what a deal of work Christ hath in hand, and how he carries it on for thy salvation, it would melt thy heart into tears of joy. O think on it, that Christ, and Christ's blood, and Christ's prayers, are all at work! that Christ pleads thy cause, and perfumes thy duties in this incense; and takes thy person to God his Father, and cries, *O my Father, be merciful to this sinner, pardon his sins, and save his soul, for the sake of Jesus:* O blessed mediation! *O blessed is the man,* that knows how to *meditate on this day and night!*

8. Consider the power of Christ's intercession with his Father. Is he not to this purpose a priest to God, and called thereto by God? Is he not the Son of God, yea, God himself? Is not the Father's heart as much towards us, as to our salvation, as Christ's own heart? As sure then as Christ is gone into heaven with thy

name engraven on his heart, so sure shalt thou follow him, and be with him where he is.

9. Consider the reasons of Christ's intercession: many are given, but this may be sufficient, *It is God's own ordinance;* the very wisdom of God found out this way, that a high-priest should be appointed, who should die for sinners, and afterward present his death to his Father by way of intercession on their behalf. Now then, if God himself found out this way, and hath said, *This is my pleasure, that Christ my Son shall be a priest, and that he shall offer himself, and present himself, and his offering, and his prayer, to me for his people:* O my soul, dispute not, but rest on this, admire the contrivance of God; say, *O the depth!* question no farther, only meditate, and ponder, and consider it, till thou feelest Christ's intercession darting its influence and efficacy on thy sin-sick soul.

Sect. III.—*Of Desiring Jesus in that respect.*

Let us desire Jesus carrying on this great work in his intercession. O my soul, rouse up, and set this blessed object before thy face! Take a full view of it, until thy affections begin to be warm, and thou beginnest to cry, *O for my part in Christ's intercession! O I would not be left out of Christ's heavenly prayers for ten thousand worlds!* Come and be serious! the object is admirably precious; long for it, pant after it! God understands the rhetoric of thy breathing, as well as of thy cry. But what is there in Christ's intercession that is so desirable? I answer—

1. In Christ's intercession lies the present transaction of our soul's salvation. Such passages as hitherto we have spoken of, are done and past; the virtue and influence of all these transactions continue, and will continue for ever and ever; but the several actings had their periods; and only Christ's session, and mission of his Spirit, and his blessed intercession, both were, and now are, the present employment of Jesus Christ. Now he prays, now he presents his person, merits, intercession. This is the present transaction of Jesus Christ, and therefore most desirable: methinks I long to know what Christ is now doing in heaven for my soul; and is it not this, is not all his time spent either in reading pardons for his redeemed ones, or in presenting petitions for them, and pleading for them? Surely he is still interceding every day, it is his present work for our souls, O desirable work!

2. In this present transaction lies the application of all Christ's former actings, whether of his habitual righteousness, or of his active and passive obedience. All these passages of Christ's incarnation, conception, birth, life, and death, which more especially we look upon as the meritorious causes of our salvation, had been nothing to us, if they had not been applied

by Christ: Christ purchased salvation by those acts, but he possesseth us of our salvation by this consummate act of his intercession. But if Christ's intercession be the applying cause, if it bring home to my soul all the former transactions of Christ, saying, *All these are thine, even thine,* O how desirable must this intercession be!

3. In this application lies that communion and fellowship which we have with the Father and the Son: *I pray for these, that as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, they also may be one in us.* Understand this soberly: we cannot think that there should be that oneness in equality betwixt God and us, as betwixt God and Christ; no, but there is oneness in similitude, even in this life; by virtue of Christ's intercession we have oneness with God and Christ, not only in comforts, but also in graces; I pray you mark this; when I speak of communion with God in this life, I mean especially the communion of grace between God and the soul; on God's part there is a special influence of grace and favour to man, and on man's part there is a special return of grace and honour to God. Some trembling souls are apt to think, that all communion with God and Christ consists only in the comfort of the holy Spirit; whereas Christians may as really have communion with God in secret conveyances of grace, inward supports, in the hidden drawings of the soul Godward, as in the more open and comfortable manifestations of God unto the soul: communion with God is a familiar friendship, (I speak it in an holy, humble sense;) now do we not as usually go to a friend for advice as for comfort? In a friend's bosom we entrust our sorrows as well as our joys. Suppose a soul even overwhelmed, and ready to break, betaking itself unto God, and venting itself before the Lord; if after, the soul hath no more ease, than by the bare lancing of the sore, if God pours in no balm at all, but only gives support; shall we say that this soul in this case hath no communion with God? O yes! that soul lives, the sun shines, though a cloud interposeth; God smiles, though the soul doth not perceive it; thou hast his strengthening presence, if not his shining: now, this is the fruit of Christ's blessed intercession; and this is the subject matter of Christ's intercession, *O my Father, that these may be one in us; I in them, and thou in me; I in them by the influence and power of my Spirit, and thou in me by the fulness and power of the Godhead.* And is not this a most desirable thing?

4. In this communion lies the fruition of Christ in glory, grace brings to glory: if communion here, we shall have communion hereafter; and this also is a part of Christ's prayer and intercession, *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.* This communion with Christ is above all

desirable; the communion which the saints shall have with Christ, never will wander after any other objects; O the intimacy that will be then betwixt Christ and Christians! O what communication of glory will there be to each other! *These shall walk with me,* (saith Christ,) *for they are worthy.*

O my soul, if this be the business of Christ's intercession, if all these particulars are contained in the bowels of this one transaction, how is it that thou art not gasping, groaning, sick unto death, with the vehement thirst after thy portion in Christ's intercession? If there be such a thing as desire in this heart of mine, O that now it would break out! O that it would vent itself with mighty longings, and infinite aspirings after this blessed object! Lord, I desire, but help thou my faint desires; blow on my dying spark, it is but little; and if I know any thing of my heart, I would have it more; O that my spark would flame! Lord, I desire that I might desire; O breathe it into me, and I will desire thee.

Sect. IV.—*Of Hoping in Jesus in this respect.*

Let us hope in Jesus carrying on this great work of our salvation in his intercession. O my soul, hope in Jesus, but rest not till thou canst give a reason of thy hope, till thou canst prove that they are the hopes which grace, and not only nature, hath wrought; that they are grounded upon scripture promises, and sound evidences; that they purify the heart; that the more thou hopest, the less thou sinnest; that they depend on sure and infallible causes, as on the truth, power, and mercy of God; on the merits, mediation, and intercession of Jesus Christ; is this among the rest the spring of thy hope? Canst thou follow the stream, till it brings thee to this fountain, that now thou canst say, *O this intercession is mine?* Come, search and try, it is worth the pains.

1. If Christ's intercession is mine, then is the Spirit's intercession mine: in this case we need not ascend up into heaven to learn the truth, rather let us descend into our own hearts, and look whether Christ hath given us of his Spirit, which makes us cry unto God with sighs and groans which cannot be uttered; O come and let us ransack our own consciences; let us search whether we feel the Spirit of Christ crying in us, *Abba Father:* Certainly these two are as the cause and the effect: Christ's intercession in heaven, and his Spirit's intercession, are as twins of a birth! Or rather, Christ's intercession in heaven breeds another intercession in the hearts of his saints. It is the same Spirit dwelling in Christ and in all his members, that stirs them to cry, *Abba Father.* Here then is my argument; if Christ hath put his Spirit into thy heart, and if the Spirit hath set thine heart on

work to make incessant intercessions for thyself, then is Christ's intercession thine. O my soul, hath God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into thy heart? Hast thou the indwelling of the Spirit; and now by the help of the Spirit canst thou pray with earnestness, confidence, and an holy importunity? Canst thou cry, *Abba, Father?* Canst thou cry with earnestness, with confidence, Father? and *Abba, Father,* (or Father, Father,) with an holy importunity? These are the signs of the Spirit's intercession. O that thou wouldst deal faithfully with thyself; canst thou by the help of the Spirit go to thy Father in the name of Christ? As Christ is gone before into the holy of holies to intercede; so canst thou with boldness follow after, *and enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus?* Canst thou say, God hath given me his Spirit, and his Spirit hath shewn me Christ as my mediator at the right-hand of God; and now, under the wing of such a mediator, I can with the Spirit's assistance go with boldness to speak any thing in the ears of God? Surely this is the fruit, the effect, of Christ's intercession, and therefore thou mayest comfortably conclude, *Christ's intercession is mine.*

2. If I feel a holy disposition to pray and intercede for others, especially for the distresses of the church of God, then is Christ's intercession mine. We should, as near as we may, in every thing conform to Christ; and this conformity is an evidence of our interest in Christ: O my soul, go down into the inmost closet of thy heart, look what disposition there is in it towards the members of Christ; and thou mayest conclude; there is in Christ's heart the very same disposition towards thee. Can I think that my narrow, straitened, sinful bowels, are larger than those wide, compassionate, tender bowels of Jesus Christ? As a drop of water is in comparison of the ocean, and as a gravel stone is in comparison of the sand; so is my heart to Christ's, and my love to Christ's, and my bowels to Christ's. Come then, and try by this sign: *Hereby we know that we are translated from death to life, if we love the brethren; he that loveth not his brother, abideth in death.—Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for the brethren.* Is not this plain? if I love the brethren, Christ loveth me; if I feel in my heart an holy disposition to go to God, and to pray, and cry, and intercede for a saint in misery, surely the Lord Jesus hath as much bowels towards me, to go and intercede for me, and to present my prayers unto God the Father; his intercession is mine.

Sect. V.—*Of Believing in Jesus in that respect.*

Let us believe in Jesus, as carrying on this great work of our salvation in his intercession: silence, unbelief! be not tyrannical to thyself, for Christ will not, sin shall do thee no hurt, nor Satan, no, nor God himself, for Jesus Christ can work him to any

thing; if he but open his wounds in heaven, he will so work his Father, that thy wounds on earth shall close up presently.

Go to Christ as interceding for his saints; this act of Christ is for the application of all the former acts on Christ's part: and our faith closing with it, is for the application of this, and all the other actings of Christ on our part. Now is our faith led up very high; it may at once see earth and heaven; it may see all that Christ hath acted for it here, and all that Christ doth act, and will act in heaven for it hereafter. It is not an ordinary, single, particular act of faith, that will come up to this glorious mystery; it is a comprehensive act, it is such an act as puts the soul into a condition of glorious triumph; *And being made perfect,* (saith the apostle,) *he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him:* now therefore lead up thy faith to this blessed object, and thou hast under consideration the whole of Christ's actings in this world from first to last; in respect of mediation, this is the upshot, the period, the consummation, the perfection of all.

In going to Christ as interceding for us, look to the purpose, end, intent, and design of Christ's intercession: now the ends of Christ, in reference to us, are these:—

1. That we might have fellowship with the Father, and the Son; *I pray for these, that as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, they also may be one in us.*

2. That we might have the gift of the Holy Ghost; *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth.*

3. That we might have protection against all evil; *I pray* (saith Christ) *that thou wouldst keep them from evil.*

4. That we might have free access to the throne of grace; so the apostle, *Seeing then we have a great high-priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession, and come boldly to the throne of grace.* And again, *Having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and having an high-priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.*

5. That we might have the inward intercession of the Spirit, which is, as it were, the echo of Christ's intercession in our heart: *The Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.* It is the same Spirit groans in us, which more distinctly in Christ prayeth for us. *These things I spake in the world,* (saith our Saviour,) *that they might have my joy filled in themselves.* I have made this prayer in the world, and left a record and pattern of it in the church, that they feeling the same heavenly desires kindled in their own hearts, may be comforted in the workings of that Spirit of prayer in them, which testifieth to their souls the quality of that intercession which I made for them in the heaven of heavens; certainly there is a dependence

of our prayer on Christ's prayer: as it is with the sun, though the body of it abide in the heavens, yet the beams of it descend to us here on earth; so the intercession of Christ, though it is made in heaven, yet the groans and desires of the touched heart, as the beams thereof, are on earth.

6. That we might have the sanctification of our services; of this the Levitical priests were a type, *For they bare the iniquity of the holy things of the children of Israel, that they might be accepted; and he is the angel of the covenant, who hath a golden censer, to offer up the prayers of the saints.* Some observe a threefold evil in man, of every of which we are delivered by Christ: First, an evil condition under the guilt of sin: Secondly, an evil nature under the corruption of sin: Thirdly, an evil in all our services by the adherence of sin; for that which toucheth an unclean thing, is made unclean thereby. Now, Christ by his righteousness and merits justifieth our persons from the guilt of sin; and Christ by his grace and Spirit doth purify our faculties from the corruption of sin; and Christ by his incense and intercession doth cleanse our services from the adherence of sin, so that in them the Lord smells a sweet savour, and both we and our services find acceptance with God.

7. That we might have the pardon of all sin. It is by virtue of Christ's intercession that a believer sinning of infirmity, hath a pardon of course, for Christ is his advocate to plead his case; or if he sin of presumption, and the Lord give repentance, he hath a pardon at the hands of God the Father by virtue of this intercession.

8. That we might have the salvation of our souls in the day of Jesus; *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory.* O to see the Lord Jesus Christ glorified, must be a glorious thing; what is it to see his glory, but to behold the lustre of his divinity through his humanity? We may be sure God shall appear through the humanity of Christ, as much as is possible for the divinity to appear in a creature; and therefore men and angels will be continually viewing of Christ. I know there is another glory of Christ, which the Father will put upon him; *Because he humbled himself, therefore God will exalt him, and give him a name above every name;* and we shall see him in this glory. O the ravishing sight! Christ is so lovely, that the saints cannot leave, but they must and will *follow the Lamb wheresoever he goes;* there shall be no moment to all eternity, wherein Christ shall be out of sight to so many thousand thousands of saints. Is not this a blessed end of Christ's intercession? Hither tend all the rest; and for this above all Christ intercedes to his Father, *Father, I would have my saints with me. O that all the daughters of Zion may behold king Solomon, with the crown wherewith thou hast crowned*

him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.

Let our faith then act dependently upon the intercession of Christ, in these very ends; this is the very nature of faith, it relies upon God in Christ, and upon all the promises of Christ: So then, is there a desirable end in Christ's intercession which we aim at? O let us act our faith dependently; let us rely, stay, or lean upon Christ to that same end! let us cast ourselves upon the very intercession of Jesus Christ: saying, *O Christ, there is enough in thee, and in this intercession of thine, and therefore there will I stick, and abide for ever.*

Faith also must ever and anon be crying, wrestling with God, that virtue may go out of Christ's intercession into our hearts. *I have heard, Lord, that there is an office erected in heaven, that Christ, as priest, should be ever praying and interceding for his people: O that I may feel the efficacy of Christ's intercession! and now in prayer, O that I could feel in this prayer, the warmth, and heat, and spiritual fire, which usually falls down from Christ's intercession into the heart! Lord, warm my spirit in this duty; give me the kisses of thy mouth; O that I may now have communion with thee, thy Spirit upon me, thy protection over me! O that my pardon may be sealed, my grace confirmed, my soul saved in the day of Jesus!*

Sect. VI.—*Of Loving Jesus in that respect.*

Let us love Jesus, as carrying on this great work of our salvation in his intercession. Now, two things more especially will excite our love. 1. Christ's love to us. 2. Our propriety in Christ. For the first, many acts of Christ's love have appeared before, and every one is sufficient to draw our love to him again.

1. In the beginning of time he loved man above all creatures, for after he had made them all, he then spake as he never did before: *Let us make man after our own image, after our likeness, and let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over all the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth;* and though man unmade himself by sin, Christ's love yet was not broke off, but held forth in a promise till the day of performance, the *seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.*

2. In the fulness of time his love was manifest; the seed then blossomed, and the birth then came out in an high expression of love; the love of Christ was born, and saw the light: *After that,* saith the apostle, *the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared.* I shall not need sure to instance in succeeding passages; so far as we have gone, we have clearly seen Christ's life was a perfect mirror of his love: as there is no beam in the

sun, in which there is no light; so there was no act in the life of Christ, but to a spiritual eye it shines with the light of love.

3. At this time there is a coal of burning love in the breast of Christ: this fire was indeed from everlasting, but the flames are as hot this day as ever; now is it that Christ loves, and lives; and wherefore lives, but only to love us, and to intercede for us? Christ makes our salvation his constant calling; he is ever at work, *yesterday, and to-day, and for ever;* there is not one hour in the day, nor one day in a year, nor year in an age, wherein Christ is not busy with his Father in this heavenly employment of interceding for us. He loved us before he died for us, his love being the cause why he died for us; and he loves us still, in that now he intercedes for us: It is as much as to say, *Christ hath loved us, and he repents not of his love:* love made him die for us, and, if it were to do again, he would die over again; O the love of Christ towards our poor souls! how many thousands of particulars might I draw out of scripture, expressing Christ's love to us in this respect.

2d. Another motive of our love to Christ is our propriety in Christ: *Ye are not your own,* said the apostle of us; *and he is not his own,* may we say of Christ: if any ask how this may be; I answer, that the soul in loving Christ is not her own, and in regard of loving, Christ is not his own; every one makes over itself to another; and propriety or interest to itself on both sides ceaseth; *My beloved is mine, and I am his,* saith the spouse; not as if Christ should leave off to be his own, or to be a free God, when he becomes ours; no, but he so demeans himself, in respect of love, as if he were not his own; he putteth on such relations, and assumes such offices of engagement, as if he were all for us, and nothing for himself; thus he is called a Saviour, a Redeemer, a King, a Priest, a Prophet, a Friend, a Guide, a Head, a Husband, a Leader, Ransomer, Intercessor; and what not, of this nature!

O my soul, come hither; if thou hadst as many hearts in one, as there are men and angels in heaven and earth, all these would be too little for Jesus Christ: only go as far as thou canst, and love him with that heart thou hast, yea, love him with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and all thy might; and as Christ, in loving thee, is not his own, so let thy soul in loving Christ be not her own: come, love thy Christ, and not thyself; possess thy Christ, and not thyself; enjoy thy Christ, and not thyself; live in thy Christ, and not in thyself; solace thyself in Jesus Christ, not in thyself; say with the apostle, *I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless, I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.* Certainly, if ever thou comest to love Christ truly, thou canst not but deny thyself and all created lovers. This love will screw up thy soul so high above the world, and above thy flesh, and above thy life, and above all other lovers, that nothing on this side Christ, whe-

ther in heaven or earth, will come in competition with him. O for a soul filled with the fulness of God! O for a soul stretched out to its widest capacity for the entertainment of God! O my soul, that thou wert but *able to comprehend with all the saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, that passeth knowledge!*

Sect. VII.—*Of Joying in Jesus in that respect.*

Let us joy in Jesus, as carrying on this great work of our salvation in his intercession.

O I am much opposed (says one:) *Dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me;* they persecute, reproach, revile, so that I am killed all the day long.—And what then? What matters opposition of men, so long as Christ doth intercede for thee in heaven? And tell me, hast thou no experience of this truth? Doth not relief come in strangely now and then? Why, write upon the forehead of such favours, *I have a merciful and compassionate Mediator in heaven.*

O I am much opposed (says another) that I cannot pray; alas! my prayers are dull, weak, and dry, and without spirit and life. If so, be humbled for it; and yet know this, that when thou canst not pray, Christ prays for thee, and he prays that thou mayst pray: and tell me, hast thou no experience of this truth? hath not sometimes thy spirit been enlarged in prayer? hast thou not sometimes felt thy heart warmed? hast thou not sometimes in prayer been lifted up above thyself, and above the world? Conclude then, my intercessor above hath sent me this gift; it is not I, but Christ's intercession, that by a secret operation hath given me the Spirit to help mine infirmity; these are the intercessions of the Spirit of Christ, and they are the very echo of the intercession of Christ in his own person.

Sect. VIII.—*Of Praying to, and Praising Jesus in that respect.*

Let us pray, and praise our Jesus in that respect.

1. Let us pray or sue our interest in this intercession; call on Jesus, or on God the Father in and through Jesus, that Christ's intercessions may be ours, and that he would make it out to us in a way of assurance every day more and more.

2. Let us praise, let us bless God and Christ for every transaction in heaven for us. Heaven is full of his praises; why should not earth ring with the sound thereof? *Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, praise his holy name.*

Sect. IX.—*Of Conforming to Jesus in that respect.*

Let us conform to Jesus in respect of his intercession. I cannot think but in every action of Christ there is something imi-

table of us. As to the present, I shall instance only in these particulars.

1. Christ appears in heaven for us; let us appear on earth for him. Is there not equity, as well as conformity to this duty? O my soul, consider what Christ is doing, consider wherein the intercession of Jesus Christ consists! is not this the first part of it? He appears in heaven before saints and angels, and before God and his Father in thy behalf; and art thou afraid of worms, mortals, dust and ashes, in his cause, or for his truth? Shall Jesus Christ own thee in heaven, and wilt thou not own Jesus Christ here in this world? O what a mighty engagement is here to stand to Christ, and to appear for Christ, and to own his cause in these backsliding times; in that Christ, who sits at the right hand of God, is ready to appear in person for us, both as a mediator, sponsor, solicitor, advocate, and ambassador!

2. Christ spends all his time for us and our salvation; let us spend all our time for him, and in his service. The apostle tells us, that *he ever lives to make intercession for us;* it is not for a day, or a month, or a year, but he lives for ever upon this account; for ever *(i. e.)* during all the time from his ascension, until the end of the world, he is still interceding; surely people do not think what Christ is doing in heaven for them. If you would but seriously consider, that Christ, without any weariness or intermission, is ever interceding; how would this engage you in his service? Ah Christians! if you should continue praying, praising, reading, hearing, all this day without any intermission; how would you say, *When will the day be done, when will the Sabbath be at an end?* Well, but Christ is not weary of serving you: when you have done your duties, he takes your persons and duties, and presents all unto his Father; he prays over your prayers, continues praying, and saying, *Lord accept of a short, poor, imperfect service done on earth, for my sake, and for those merits' sake which I am continually presenting to thee in heaven.* O why do we not come up to this conformity? O why are we so uncomformable to the actings of Christ? We cannot but judge this to be most equal, that *they who live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who ever lives to make intercession for them.*

3. He prays for us, and for all believers, to his Father. Let us pray for ourselves, and for all our brethren, and for all sorts of men, though they be our enemies, for we were no better to Jesus Christ. *Learn of me,* saith Christ; and so far as he is imitable, let us follow him. Doth Christ pray? let us pray. Doth he pray for us and others? let us pray for ourselves, and then let us pray one for another.

4. Christ takes our prayers, and mingles them with his own prayers, intercessions, incense, and so presents all his own work unto God the Father. O let this be our care, to put up all

our prayers to God in the name of Christ; and to stay ourselves upon the intercessions of Christ: When all is done, let us beg the acceptance of our prayers, not for our sakes, but for his sake, who perfumes our prayers, by interweaving them with his prayers. Many a poor soul is afraid to pray to God; for want of the due consideration of this conformity, such a one goes to prayer, and he looks upon it as it lies upon his own heart, or as it comes from himself, and then he cries, *O what a poor, weak, sinful, prayer is this?* Well, but if this weak prayer of thine be once mingled with the glorious and heavenly prayer of Jesus Christ, the weakness will soon vanish, and thy prayer will find acceptance with God. O conform to Christ in this point; he will not present thy prayers to God, but he will first mingle it with his own prayers; no more shouldst thou present a prayer to God, but in Christ's name, considering that all thy prayers find acceptance in, for, and through the intercession of Jesus Christ.

5. Christ by his intercession, *saves us to the uttermost.* O let us serve him to the uttermost; surely all we can do is too little to answer so great a love as this. O Christians! why should it be esteemed a needless thing to be rigorously and exactly circumspect? Christ paid our debt to the uttermost farthing, drank every drop of our bitter cup, and now presents all unto his Father, by way of intercession, and saves us *thoroughly to the uttermost*; why should not we labour to perform his service, and to fulfil every one of his commandments, thoroughly and to the uttermost also? Certainly there is a duty which concerns us, to be *hot in religion*, Rev. iii. 16. to be *zealous of good works*, Tit. ii. 14. to *walk circumspectly*, or *precisely*, as the word carries it, Ephes. v. 15. to be *fervent in Spirit*, Rom. xii. 11. to *strive to enter in at the strait gate*, Luke xiii. 24. to *contend for the faith*, Jude iii. with an holy kind of *violence to lay hold upon the kingdom of heaven*, Matt. xi. 12. O that ever men should be afraid of taking God's part too much, or fighting too valiantly under the colours of Christ; of being too busy about salvation; of being singular (as they call it) in the duties of religion. I observe, men are content to be singular in any thing, save in the service of God: you desire and labour to be singularly rich, and singularly wise, and singularly proud; but you can by no means endure singularity or eminency in zeal, and the Lord's service; in matters of religion you are resolved to do as the most do, though in so doing you damn your own souls! O come and learn this lesson of Christ, he saves us to the uttermost; let us serve him with all our hearts, and with all our souls, and with all our might.

LOOKING UNTO JESUS,

IN HIS SECOND COMING.

BOOK IX.

CHAP. I.

SECT. I.—*Of Christ's preparing for Judgment.*

AND is not all done yet? O the unwearied patience, love, mercy, free grace of Christ, in carrying on this mighty work! He begun it before the beginning of the world; since then he hath been labouring in it about six thousand years; and now the time of restoring being come, he will perfect what he hath begun. In this also, as in the former, we shall first lay down the object, and then give directions how to look upon it.

The object is Jesus carrying on that great work of our salvation, in his coming again to earth; and taking up with him all his saints into heaven. In this work I shall set before you these particulars:

1. Christ's preparing for judgment.
2. Christ's coming to judgment.
3. Christ's summons of the elect, to come under judgment.
4. Christ and the saints meeting at the judgment-day.
5. Christ's sentencing or judging the saints for eternal glory.
6. Christ and the saints judging the rest of the world.
7. Christ and his saints going up into heaven; when shall be the end of this world.
8. Christ surrendering up the kingdom to God, even the Father.
9. Christ's subjection to the Father, that God may be all in all.
10. Christ (notwithstanding this) being all in all to his blessed, saved, redeemed saints, to all eternity.

1. For his preparing for judgment. When once the number of his elect shall be completed, and the work of his intercession shall be at an end, then immediately will follow these particulars:

(1.) *A great voice comes out of the temple of heaven, saying, It is done.* It comes out of the temple of heaven, that we may understand it to be the voice of Christ. And if this speech be directed unto God, it is as if Christ had bespoke his Father thus:

'And now, O my Father, I have done; that office of the priesthood which we erected, is at an end; I have sat at thy right-hand, interceding for my saints ever since my ascension; and now their number is completed, I am resolved to unpin the fabric of the world, and take it down; it stands but for their sakes, and therefore now let the seventh angel blow his trumpet, that the mystery of God may be finished: *I swear by him that lives for ever, that time shall be no longer.*'

(2.) No sooner is this said, but *the seventh angel sounds.* This seventh angel, saith Pareus, is the archangel that proclaims Christ's coming, with a great and mighty shout; *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God. The Lord shall descend with a shout!* But before he descends, and I believe upon the very discovery of his coming down, there will be a shout in heaven; for so it follows, *And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven; the voices of blessed souls, and blessed saints, and blessed angels in heaven:* no sooner Christ bids the angel sound, that is, summon all souls, and all angels, and bid them wait on me; now I resolve to go down, and to judge the world. No sooner, I say, Christ bids the angel sound, but presently, at the joy of his command, all the voices in heaven give a shout: this is the long-looked-for day, the day of perfecting the number of the saints; the day of joining the souls and bodies of the saints together; the day of convening all the families both of saints and angels; the day of bringing up the bride unto the Lamb, and of completing the marriage solemnity; and therefore no wonder if, at this news, great voices and cries (such as are used by mariners, or gatherers of the vintage) were made in heaven. Now they shout, and sing a new song, *The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.*

(3.) After this shout, *The four and twenty elders, which sit before God on their seats, fall upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.* By these we understand all God's saints of the Old and New Testament, comprehended under the twelve patriarchs, and twelve apostles; first they praise, and then they pray. 1. They praise God for taking to himself his own power. 2. They pray Christ to go on to judgment.

(4.) God the Father is well pleased with Christ's purpose of judging the world: *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right-hand until I make thine enemies thy foot-stool.* I know these words were spoke to Christ at his ascension into heaven, yet that hinders not, but that now God speaks them again to Christ; for *as yet*, saith the apostle, *we see not all things put under him;* and God's purpose was, that Christ should rule until he had put all

things in subjection under his feet. There is a difference betwixt Christ's reign before, and his present reign; at the day of judgment Christ hath a double throne, wherein he sits and reigns: *To him that overcomes will I give to sit with me on my throne, as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.* That kingly rule that Christ hath from his ascension, is upon his Father's throne; but the kingdom that Christ shall have at the day of judgment, and ever after, is the joint reign of him with the Father; he shall have a throne himself, and the saints shall sit with him in his own throne. And now, saith the Father, *Sit thou at my right-hand,* sit on thy own throne by me; go on to judge the nations; I will not judge them, but only in thee, and by thee; *Lo, I have committed all judgment unto the Son;* and do thou judge them, until thou hast rewarded thy friends, and made thine enemies thy footstool.

Christians, I cannot but wonder at this joy in heaven, and that we have so little of this on earth; we say with cold lips, and frozen hearts, *Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven;* but if our prayers were real and fervent, if we could but imitate those heavenly citizens, what longings would be in our hearts after Christ's coming? How should we rejoice at the very thoughts thereof? Christ comforting his disciples in respect thereof, speaks these words, *When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.* The fulness of our redemption is a ground of consolation; all the spirits above are sensible of this; God, and Christ, and the angels and saints, rejoice: *The Spirit and the bride say, Come;* and Christ himself saith, *Surely I come quickly;* O let us say *amen* to it; *even so come, Lord Jesus.*

Sect. II.—*Of Christ coming to Judgment.*

No sooner is Christ prepared, and all in readiness, but he descends from his throne, to the judgment-seat. In this passage I shall observe these particulars:

1. He descends with his train. He comes with his royal attendants out of heaven: *Behold, the Lord comes with mighty angels. Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment unto all.* Certainly a numberless number shall wait upon him. Daniel tells us of a thousand thousand, that this day minister unto Christ; *A thousand thousand ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him:* Or, if heaven have more, I believe heaven will empty itself of all the saints, and all the angels; not one spirit shall stay when Christ descends: *The Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him.* O what a glorious day will this be: If one sun make the morning sky so glorious, what a glorious morning will that be, when so many thousands of suns shall

shine over our heads, the glorious body of Christ surpassing them all in glory! Here's a new heaven of suns and stars, such as this nether world never saw, *Lo, the Sun of Righteousness, with all his morning stars singing and shouting for joy.* Heaven now empties itself of all its created citizens, and cleaves asunder to make way for Christ and all his train.

2. In his descent through the heavens, he shakes the heavens. *And the powers of heaven shall be shaken.* The whole frame of heaven, the mighty bodies thereof, most mighty in their substance, motion, and operation, shall be shaken: *At his nod the pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished.* As yet they are subject to vanity, and therefore it is no wonder, if at the coming of Christ they tremble. In this shaking, the evangelist adds, that the glorious lights of heaven shall be altered: *The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall.* The coming of Christ shall bring with him such a light, that the splendour of the sun and moon shall be obscured.

3. As he passes through the elementary world, a fire doth usher him: *Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.—Behold the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind.—And the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire.* In which respect, *Daniel saw his throne like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire; a fiery stream issued and came forth from before him.* And at last this fire shall have that effect, that the very *elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up.* O Christians! What cause have we to make the apostle's use of this point, 'Seeing all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? Looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.'

He descends lower and lower, till he is inwrapt with clouds: *Hereafter shall you see the Son of man sitting on the right-hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.* When he went up into heaven, it is said that *a cloud received him out of their sight;* and the angels then said, *Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up into heaven, shall so come, in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.* He went up in clouds, and he shall come down in clouds: *I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven.* Here is the first sight of Christ to men on the earth; when once he is come down into the clouds, then shall they lift up their eyes, and have a full view of Jesus Christ: a cloud first received him out of their sight; and a cloud now discovers him to their sight; *Then shall appear the sign of the*

Son of man in heaven; and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Is it not plain, that the first appearing and sight of Christ, at his second coming from heaven, is in the midst of clouds; *Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him.* Shall not we, at the first view of him in the clouds, cry out, O yonder is he, whose blood redeemed us, whose Spirit cleansed us, whose prayers prevail for us, whose law did govern us: yonder comes he in whom we trusted, and now we see he hath not deceived our trust; yonder is he for whom we waited long, and now we see we have not waited in vain.

I verily believe, thus it will be with us one day; we shall have comfort then. O let us comfort ourselves with these words; and ever and anon cry, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!—make haste, my beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart, upon the mountain of spices.'

Sect. III.—*Of Christ's summoning of the Elect to come under Judgment.*

No sooner is he in the clouds, but *he sends his holy angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heaven to another.*

1. He *shall send his angels.* This was their office from their first creation; they were still sent of God this way, and that way; and indeed herein is one difference betwixt Christ and the angels, he was to sit at God's right-hand, but they were sent abroad, to minister to the saints and people of God.

2. The commission given the angels, immediately to sound the trumpet; so it follows, *And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet:* some would have it to be a material trumpet, others more probably look upon this as a metaphor; or a sound formed in the air, like the sound of a trumpet. A voice it is, without all controversy; and, metaphorically, it may be called a trumpet, both from the clearness and greatness of the sound; so loud shall it be, that it will pierce into the ears of the dead in their graves; *it will shake the world, rend the rocks, break the mountains, dissolve the bonds of death, burst down the gates of hell, and unite all spirits to their own bodies. The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God.* In these words is shewed the coming of Christ in three particulars; *with a shout, with a voice, and with a trumpet.* It is agreed by most, that the transactions at the giving of the law on mount Sinai, were a representation of the proceedings which shall be at the great day of judgment; now in that transaction we read of a three-fold voice, *the voice of God, the voice of thunder, and the voice of a trumpet,* (Exod. xix. 16. compared with Exod. xx. 1.) and accordingly we find

the apostle speaking of a three-fold voice, *of the voice of Christ, of the voice of thunder, and of the voice of a trumpet.*

1. The Lord himself shall descend *with a shout.* Lyra and others think this to be the voice of Christ himself, saying, with a loud voice, *Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment.* Thus Jesus cried with a loud voice, *Lazarus, come forth;* and with such a voice will he call on the dead at the last day. So much Christ himself hath taught us; *The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.* The hour is, because by the voice he raised some at his first coming. And the hour is coming, because in the like manner he will raise up all men at the last day: *Marvel not at this,* (saith Christ,) *for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and they shall come forth.* As at the creation of the world he said, *Let there be light, and there was light;* so at the dissolution of the world he will say, *Let the dead rise; let the sea give up the dead that are in it, and death and hell deliver up the dead which are in them;* and it will be so.

2. The Lord shall descend, *with the voice of the archangel.*

Some argue this archangel to be Gabriel, others Raphael, others Michael. The Jews have an ancient tradition, that there are seven principal angels that minister before the throne of God, and therefore called archangels. The scriptures seem to speak much that way, calling them, *seven lamps of fire burning before the throne; and seven horns, and seven eyes of the Lamb; and the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth; and seven eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth;* and yet more plainly, *seven angels that stand before God.* Now, which of these seven is the archangel here spoken of, is hard to determine; only probably it is, that all the archangels, and all the angels, are hereby understood, as comprehended under that one.

But what is this voice of the archangel? I conceive that thereby we are to understand thunder. Here is a manifest allusion to the proceedings at the giving of the law; now the voice there mentioned, besides the voice of God and the voice of a trumpet, is the voice of thunder: *And it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, there were thunders.*

2. The Lord shall descend, *with the trumpet of God.* Such a voice was used also at the giving of the law; and so it will be now, when men are called to account for the keeping or breaking of it. For the understanding of this, our last translation tells us, that *Christ shall send his angels with the great sound of a trumpet;* in the margin of our translation it is read, that *Christ shall send his angels with a trumpet, and a great voice;* that is, *with a great voice, like the voice of a trumpet.*

But why is this sound as of a trumpet, called *the trumpet of*

God? I answer, for the greatness of it; for it is usual in the Hebrew language, for the setting forth of the greatness of a thing, to add the name of God to the word, whereby the thing is signified: as, *Gen.* xxiii. 6. *A prince of God,* that is, a mighty prince, *Gen.* xxx. 8.; *with the wrestlings of God,* that is, with great wrestlings, *Psal.* xxxvi. 6.; *mountains of God,* that is, great mountains, *Psal.* lxxx. 10.; *cedars of God,* that is, very high cedars; so here, *the trump of God,* that is, a very great sound, like the sound of a trumpet. It is said in the law, there were *thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount; and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people that were in the camp trembled;* and if there was trembling at the giving of the law, O what trembling will be at the general assize, when sinners shall be condemned for breaking of it?

3. No sooner is the shout made, but the saints arise; it is true, the saints that are alive need no resurrection, but upon them will this trumpet have its effect. Something like death shall seize upon them, and they shall be changed. The order of this is given in by the apostle, from the Lord: *This we say unto you by the word of our Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep; for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven in a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with him in the clouds.* The first that shall be called are the saints that sleep, and then the saints that are alive. O what a day will this be! What a strange sight to see all the dead, ever since the beginning of the world, rise out of their graves! The bodies of saints *were sown in corruption, but they are raised in incorruption; they were sown in dishonour, but raised in glory; they were sown in weakness, but raised in power; they were sown natural bodies, but raised spiritual bodies.*

4. No sooner are the saints raised, and their souls and bodies re-united with excellent majesty, but all the elect of God, from first to last, are gathered together; from the most hidden, inward, secret bosom of the earth, all shall be gathered; howsoever their dusts may be scattered into a thousand thousand parts, yet the power of Christ shall restore all those dusts, and bring them together into their several compacted bodies.

The elect must resort to Christ wheresoever he is; and the apostle is express, that Christ *is in the air, and in the clouds:* and therefore thither must the elect be gathered; they shall be caught up by the holy angels into the clouds, *to meet the Lord in the air.*

Is it possible that such a meditation should pass without some tincture on our spirits? If my ears shall hear that sound, and if my eyes shall see these sights, is it not time for me to lay these things to heart, that I may be found faithful and well-doing? As

sure as I have this book in my hand, I must be one of those that shall hear the sound of the trumpet, and away I must go from the mouth of my grave, wherever I shall be buried, to the cloud where Christ doth sit! How would I rise? O my God! set this home on my soul! O where is my lamp? and where is my oil? are all ready, and am I ready and prepared to meet the Lord in the air?

SECT. IV.—*Of Christ and the Saints meeting at the Judgment Day.*

No sooner are the saints lifted up, and set before the Judge, but these things follow:—

1. They admire the infinite glory, and beauty, and dignity, and excellency, that is in Christ. So the apostle, *When he shall come, he shall be glorified in his saints, and shall be admired in all them that believe.* All that believe shall break out into admiration of Jesus Christ; they shall at the first sight observe such an excellency in Jesus Christ, as they shall be infinitely taken with it: here we speak of Christ, and in speaking we admire; but how will they admire, when they shall not only speak or hear, but see and behold him, who is the *express image of God, and the brightness of his Father's glory.*

2. They adore and magnify the grace and glory of Jesus Christ; as it is said of the twenty-four elders, that *they fell down before him that sat on the throne, and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.* So all the saints, now advanced to stand before the throne, fall down before Christ, and worship him that lives for ever, shouting and singing about Jesus Christ, and setting out his glory, grace, and goodness: *After this I beheld* (saith John) *and lo a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindred, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb—and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb; and all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders, and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen; blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

3. Christ sets them on his right-hand; *Upon thy right-hand doth stand the queen in gold of Ophir.* When he himself ascended up into heaven, then said the Father to him, *Son sit thou down at my right-hand;* and no sooner the saints are ascended up to Christ, but he speaks the same to them, *Sit down at my right-hand:* Christ entertains them, as God the Father entertained him; he at the right-hand of God, and they at the right-hand of

Christ. The Lord now puts upon his saints heaven's glory; he adorns them with all his ornaments for the marriage day, and indeed here is the beginning of the solemnity of the marriage of the Lamb; not but that the contract was before, but the solemnity was reserved for this day, and all the glory of this day is for nothing else but to set out the solemnity of the marriage.

Sect. V.—*Of Christ's Sentencing his Saints.*

No sooner are they set on his right-hand, but he prepares for sentence.

1. The book must be opened. *And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened, and another was opened which is the book of life.* It is spoken after the manner of men, in whose public judgment are produced all the writings of the process, informations, depositions of witnesses, to shew that all actions, even the most secret ones, shall then be rehearsed and made manifest. The books of the Old and New Testament, wherein all things either to be done, or omitted, are prescribed by God. And the books of our consciences, which now are shut up and concealed from men, but then shall be made manifest to all the world. Likewise another book, which is *the book of life:* this book contains in it the names of all that are saved, from first to last.

2. All the actions, demeanours, graces, duties, and (it may be) sins, of saints, shall be produced and laid open; the Holy Ghost tells us, that *the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the book.* It appears hence, that not only names, but things, were written, and these things were produced, and accordingly they were judged.

Then shall the King say to them on his right-hand, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* Every word here is full of life and joy: 1. *Come.* This is the King's invitation of his saints to his court; he hath summoned them before to his presence, and now they are about him, they must come nearer yet, they must go with him into his presence-chamber. 2. *Come, ye blessed of my Father;* Christ blessed them when he went up to heaven, and whilst yet on earth he pronounced them blessed many a time; but now he calls them *the blessed of his Father;* it is the Father's will, as well as Christ's, that they should be blessed, *Ye blessed of my Father.* 3. *Inherit the kingdom.* Christ had told them before, *It is your Father's pleasure to give you the kingdom;* but then they were only servants, or as children under age, now they are heirs, *heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ;* and therefore they must have the inheritance in possession; they must all be kings. This word is the anointing, the setting of the crown upon the heads of the saints; *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righ-*

teousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not for me only, but unto them also that love his appearing. 4. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you. In the beginning God created heaven: his first work was to make heaven for himself and his saints to dwell in; he prepared it for them, and then he prepared them for it: but why for them? Were not angels the first creatures that possessed it? Nay, were they not created in it, or together with it? Yes, but yet the angels are not properly the heirs, sons, members, spouse of God and Christ, as the saints are: the angels are but ministering spirits, and the servants of the bridegroom; but the saints are the bride himself, heirs, and co-heirs with Christ, as the saints are. 5. Prepared for you from the foundation of the world. This was the great design of God and Christ from all eternity.

Sect. VI.—*Of Christ and his Saints judging the Rest of the World.*

No sooner shall the saints be acquitted, anointed, crowned, but presently they must be enthroned, and sit with Jesus Christ to judge the world.

1. As Christ is on a throne, so must the elect be set on thrones; *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne.* Thrones are for kings and judges; and in that Christ hath now lifted up his saints to this condition, he will have them sit with him as so many judges, and as so many kings; or if it be more honour to have thrones for themselves, than to sit with Christ on his throne, John in his vision saw many thrones; *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them.*

2. The goats on the left hand shall then be called to receive their doom. Now shall their hearts fail them for fear; now shall they seek death (O how gladly would they die again!) but shall not find it; now they shall cry to rocks and mountains, *Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb;* but all in vain; the command is out, angels and devils will force them to the bar, for the Lord hath spoken it; *Those mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither.*

3. They shall look on Christ, and his saints, now sitting on their thrones, as prisoners that stand at the bar in the face of the judge; so must these reprobates look the Judge and all his assessors in the face.

1. For the Judge, they shall look on him, *Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him.* And this very sight will be as convincing as if they heard Christ say, 'Thou art the man that didst murder me, thou art the man that hast pierced me; this wound, this scar, and this

print of the nails in my hands and feet, were thy doings, in sinning against me. I am he whom you did crucify afresh; I am he whose person you despised, whose commands you disobeyed, whose ministers you abused; whose servants you hated, whose offers you rejected; and of whom you said, There is no beauty in him that we should desire him.[2]

2. For the saints, they shall look on them. In the Apocryphal book there is a plain description of this: 'Then shall the righteous man stand in great boldness before the face of such as have afflicted him, and made no account of his labours; and when they see it, they shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be amazed at the strangeness of his salvation, so far beyond all that they looked for; and they, repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit, shall say within themselves, This is he whom we had sometimes in a derision, and a proverb of reproach: we fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honour; how is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is amongst the saints?' Here is a sight that will trouble and amaze the wicked, that those who sometimes were their footstools should now be on thrones; that poor Lazarus, who lay at the gates of that rich man, should now shine like a star near the Sun of righteousness; that they who were reproached, reviled, massacred, murdered by them, should now be their judges, joining with Jesus Christ to sentence them to hell.

4. A particular, strict account, shall be then required, and given,

1. Of sins: *Come,* (will Christ say) *now confess all your sins before all the world;* time was that you concealed your sins, but now every sin shall be laid open before God, angels, and men: and now is the book of their consciences opened, wherein appear all their sins, original and actual, of omission and commission. O the numberless number of evil thoughts, words, and deeds, that are now laid open. In the book are not only written all sins done, but all such sins as were intended to be done; all the projects of the heart, though never acted, those very thoughts, secrets, purposes, and projects, shall come to light; or if there be any thing more hidden or secret, as the very bent and frame of your hearts, the very inclinations of your souls to this or that evil, shall then be manifest to all the world. Nay, yet more, such sins, as by the sinners themselves were never taken notice of, either before, or at, or after the commission of them, shall this day come out. Conscience is such a kind of notary, that it keeps records of all acts and deeds, whether you observe them or no; conscience hath the pen of a ready writer, and takes in short-hand from your mouths as fast as you speak, and from your hearts as fast as you can contrive. O what a day will this be, when not a sin committed by any reprobate from the beginning of the world, but now it shall be rehearsed!

2. As an account of all sins, so an account of all temporal gifts which God hath imparted to reprobates must now be given. Some have the gifts of the world, as, riches, honours, places of authority; others have the gifts of the body, as health, strength, beauty, life; others have the gifts of the mind, as understanding, wisdom, learning; now of all these gifts they must give an account. Come, you that are rich, (saith Christ) render an account of your stewardship; how have you spent your riches? The like will he say to others according to the talents bestowed on them: you excelled in strength, beauty, health of body, length of days; and now tell me, and publish it to all the world, how were these improved? I believe many a sad answer will be given to Christ of these things.

3. Christ and his saints proceed to sentence. First, Christ the chief Judge shall pronounce it, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.* Every word breathes out nothing but vengeance and woe: to depart from that glorious presence of Christ were hell enough, but they must go with a curse; not only so, but into fire; and that must be everlasting; and therein they shall have no other company, or comforters, but devils, and they insulting over them with hellish spite, and stinging exprobations.

2. The saints shall judge the very self-same judgment: *Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?* That they as well as Christ shall judge the world, is without controversy: *And judgment was given to the saints of the most High. Ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all. Know ye not, that ye shall judge the angels?* Nor only shall we judge the world, but the god of the world, the principalities and powers that captivate wicked men at their pleasure; even they must be judged by those whom they formerly soiled; so then there is no question but they shall judge.

Only how the saints shall judge together with Christ, is a very deep question. For my part, I am apt to think that it shall not be directly known, ere it be seen or done.

O what terror it will be to all wicked men! When not only Christ, but all the saints, shall say of them, *Away with them, let them be damned.* You that are fathers, it may be that your children will thus sentence you. I remember when the Jews told Christ, that *he cast out devils through Beelzebub the prince of devils*, he answered, *If I through Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges.* They liked well enough of the miracles of their children, but they could not endure them in Christ; and therefore he tells them, that their children whom God had converted, and to whom he had given power to do the same works as he did, even they should be their judges to condemn them. And

so it may be with you, if any of your children be converted to the Lord, and you remain still in a natural estate, your very children shall be your judges, and condemn you to hell.

Sect. VII.—*Of Christ and his Saints going up into Heaven, and of the End of this World.*

No sooner are the reprobates gone to their place, but the saints ascend; now Christ ariseth from his judgment-seat, and with all the glorious company of heaven, marches toward the heaven of heavens. O what a comely march is this! what songs of triumph are sung! Christ leads the way, the cherubim attend, the seraphim wait on, angels, archangels, principalities, powers, patriarchs, prophets, priests, evangelists, martyrs, and confessors of God's law and gospel, following, attend the Judge, and King of glory; singing with melody as never ear hath heard, shining with majesty as never eye hath seen, rejoicing without measure as never heart conceived. O goodly troop of captains! each doth bear a palm of victory in his hand, each doth wear a crown of glory upon his head; the church militant is now triumphant; with a final overthrow have they conquered devils, death, and hell; and now must they enjoy God, life, and heaven.

No sooner Christ and his company are in heaven, but this whole world is set on fire.

The heavens shall pass away with a noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up.

Christians! what is the matter that we are so busy about this world? Look about you, not one of these visible objects shall that day remain, or have a being; that glorious heaven which rolls over our heads, shall be rolled *together as a scroll, and all the host shall fall down as a leaf falleth from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig-tree,—the heaven shall vanish away like smoke.* Alas! what do we do toiling all the day (it may be all our life) for a little of this little, almost nothing—earth? You that have an hundred, or two hundred, or a thousand acres, if every acre were a kingdom, all will be at last burnt up; so that none shall say that here was Preston, or here was London, or here was England, or here was Europe, or the globe of the earth on which men trod; let others boast as they will of their inheritances, but, Lord, give me an inheritance above all these visibles, heaven shall remain when earth shall vanish. Here we have no abiding city, but O let us seek one to come, even that which will abide for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Sect. VIII.—*Of Christ's Delivering up the Kingdom to God even the Father.*

No sooner is he in heaven but—

1. He presents the elect unto his Father; of this the apostle speaks, *You hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight:* to this end Christ died, that he might wash us and cleanse us by his blood, and then present us without spot unto his Father.

2. He presents all his commissions to his Father. So now he comes with all his commissions in his hand, and he delivers them all up to his Father again. In this case it is with Christ as it is with some general, whom the king sends forth with regal authority to the war, who having subdued the enemy, returns in triumph, and all being finished, makes a surrender of his place; thus Christ having discharged all his offices imposed on him, now the work is finished, leaves his function by delivering up his commissions to his Father.

Christ is said to deliver up the kingdom.

1. Because he ceaseth to execute that authority, which nevertheless he hath; as a judge that goeth from the bench is a judge still, although he giveth no judgment, but employeth his time about other occasions.

2. Because the manner of his kingdom after the judgment-day shall be wholly changed: there is no need in heaven of good laws to keep men from starting into wickedness; the orders of this life are changed into a new kind of government, and in that respect he is said to give over the kingdom.

3. He presents unto his Father not only his offices, but Christ himself is presented, and subjected unto God. Christ is considered either as God, or as man, and mediator betwixt God and man. Christ, as God, hath us subject to him, and is subject to none; but Christ, as man and mediator, is subject to his Father together with us.

In the same way as Christ delivers up the kingdom to the Father, is Christ also to be subject to his Father; but Christ delivers up his kingdom as man, and as mediator betwixt God and man; in these respects Christ (as we have heard) must reign no more, at that day his mediatorship shall cease, and by consequence in respect of his mediatorship, or in respect of his humanity, he shall that day be subject to his Father. Now it is God reigns over us, but only by Christ as mediator. God's immediate reign we discern not so clearly for the present, but when the end shall come, and Christ shall surcease his office of mediatorship, then shall the glory of Christ's divinity appear more eminently, not only above all creatures, but above the brightness of Christ's hu-

manity itself; and in this respect Christ shall then be subject, if not by a new subjection, so as he never was before.

O my soul, where wilt thou stand? or what wilt thou say, when Christ shall take thee by the hand, and bring thee into the presence of his glorious Father; when he shall present thee, and present all his commissions which he received for thee, and present himself unto his Father with thee and all saints, saying, O my Father, here we are all before thy glorious Godhead; welcome me, and welcome mine, we all stand here before thy glorious throne, and expect every way as high an entertainment as heaven, or the God of heaven, can afford!

Sect. IX.—*Of Christ's Subjection to the Father, that God may be all in all.*

Christ therefore subjects himself unto his Father, that God himself might be all in all; here we enjoy God by means, as, in the use of the word and sacraments, but when that kingdom (where these administrations are made use of) shall be delivered up, then shall God himself be all in all, without means, without defect, without end.

In prosecution of this, I shall discuss; 1. The meaning, what it is for God to be all in all; 2. The particulars, wherein more especially is God all in all.

1. For the meaning; it is a periphrasis of our complete enjoyment of God: that God may be all in all, is as much as to say, that we may enjoy God alone to all intents and purposes, neither wanting nor willing any thing besides himself; thus God is to the saints in glory, he is their exceeding great reward; they had need nothing besides himself, their draughts of happiness are taken in immediately from the fountain, and they have as much of the fountain as their souls in their widest capacity can possibly hold.

2. For the particulars wherein more especially is God our all in all? I answer;

1. In our enjoying God immediately: here we enjoy God by means; either he communicates himself unto us, through his creatures or through his ordinances, and hence it is, that we know him but in part, we see him but in a glass darkly; but when he shall be our all in all, we shall see him face to face; we shall then see God as he is, clearly and immediately.

2. It consists in our enjoying God fully: *Now I know in part* (saith the apostle) *but then shall I know, even as I am known:* our enjoyment of God is but here in its infancy, there it will be in its full age; here it is in drops, there it will be in the ocean; here we see the back parts, and we can see no more, but there we shall see his face, not his second face, (as some distinguish)

which is his grace and favour enjoyed by faith, but his first face, which is his divine essence, enjoyed by sight.

3. It consists in our enjoying God solely. Not as if there were nothing else in heaven but only God; but that God in heaven shall be all in all, and instead of all: it is God in heaven that makes heaven to be heaven; the saints' blessedness, and God's own blessedness, doth consist in the enjoyment of God himself; we shall not properly enjoy any thing else but God; and indeed what can we imagine to be in heaven which is not eminently in God himself: If it be greatness, power, glory, victory, or majesty, all these are his; if it be joy, love, peace, or beauty, or any thing amiable or desirable, all these are in him. It is he only that fills the whole capacity of the soul; it is he that so fills it that it can hold no more; it is he only that is the object of love, and therefore he only is properly enjoyed, he only is possessed with full content, as portion enough, and as reward enough, for the soul for ever.

But shall not the saints have to do with something else in heaven? O yes! I believe there shall be in heaven a communion of the blessed spirits in God, an association of the saints and angels of God. Yet this shall not take away the sole enjoyment of God, that he should not be their all in all: for they shall not mind themselves or their own good and created things, but altogether God; they shall not love them, or one another, as for themselves, but only for God: here we love God for himself, and it is gracious love; but there we shall love ourselves for God, and it is a gracious love; this is to enjoy God solely, and in this respect he is *all in all;—whom have I in heaven but thee?*

Sect. X.—*Of Christ's (notwithstanding this) being all in all to his Redeemed, to all Eternity.*

Some may object, If God be all in all, what then becomes of Christ? Is not this derogatory to Jesus Christ? I answer, No, n no wise; for

1. It is not the Father personally and only, but the Deity essentially and wholly, that is our all in all, when we say God is all in all, we do not exclude the Son and the Holy Ghost, for the whole Godhead is all in all to all the saints, as well as the first person in the Trinity: the Father is all, the Son is all, the Holy Ghost is all; and in that Christ is God, and the Son of God, we may say of Christ, that he is all in all; only the truth of this position is not from the human nature, but from the divine nature, of Jesus Christ.

2. It is not derogatory to Christ, but rather it doth exceedingly advance Christ in the thoughts of all his saints; while it was necessary, Christ veiled his Deity, and when his work of

mediation is fully finished, Christ then shall reveal his deity to his saints more than ever before. It is true, that God only, and God fully, and God immediately, is all in all; but doth that hinder that Jesus Christ is not also only, fully, and immediately, all in all? See how the scripture joins them together: *I saw no temple in the city, for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple of it; and the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.*

Now then, as I have spoken of God, so that I may speak of Christ, and conclude all with Christ, I assert this doctrine, *that the glory of Christ, which the saints shall behold in Christ to all eternity, is their all in all.* In the discussion of which, I shall open these particulars:—1. What is the glory of Christ? 2. How the saints shall behold his glory? 3. Wherein is the comprehensiveness of this expression, that the beholding of Christ is our all in all?

1st. What is the glory of Christ? I answer, that the glory of Christ is either human or divine.

1. There is an human glory, which in time was more especially conferred upon his manhood.

2. There is an essential or divine glory, which before time and after time, even from everlasting to everlasting, issueth from the Godhead; I shall speak to both these, that we may rather take a view of Christ in those glories (as we are able) wherein he will appear to his saints to all eternity.

1. For his human glory, that is either in regard of his soul, or body; for his soul, Christ was from the first instant of his conception full of glory, because even then he received grace not by measure. It is true, that by the special dispensation of God, the fulness of glory was withheld in the time of his passion, and the redundancy of glory from his soul unto his body was totally deferred until the exaltation of Christ; but Christ was no sooner exalted, and set on the right-hand of God, but immediately the interruption of joy in his soul, and the interception of glory from his soul to his body, was altogether removed. Then it was that his soul was filled with all joy which could possibly flow from the sight of an object so infinitely pleasing, as is the essence, majesty, and glory of God. And then it was that his body was replenished with as much glory as was proportionable unto the most vast capacity of any creature. Surely Christ's manhood is exalted unto an higher degree of glory than the most glorious saint or angel ever was or shall be; principalities, powers, mights, and dominions, fall short of his glory.

2. For his essential, divine glory, it is that glory which Christ hath as God: this he never laid aside; but as the sun in a dark gloomy day may not send forth his beams, so Christ the Son of Righteousness, in the time of his abode upon earth, (except a

little glimpse only in his transfiguration,) did not send forth his glorious beams; but hereafter the body or humanity of Christ shall not hinder the breaking forth of all his divine glory. But what is the essential glory of Christ? I cannot answer, it is a question not to be resolved by all the men in the world; we know little of the glory of saints, how should we know any thing of the essential glory of Christ as God?

2d. How shall the saints behold this glory? I answer: As Christ hath a twofold glory, so there is a twofold manner of beholding it, that is, ocular and mental.

1. There is an ocular vision, a sight of Christ with our very eyes; *whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold him;* with these eyes in our heads we shall one day behold the human glory of Christ: I doubt not we shall behold the beauty of heaven, the shining bodies of the saints, but above all, our very eyes shall delightfully contemplate Christ's glorious body; and indeed this shall drown all other sights.

2. There is a mental vision, a sight of Christ by the eyes of our understandings; and surely this exceeds the former, the eye of the body is only on the body of Christ, but the eye of the soul is on the body and soul, on the humanity and deity, of Jesus Christ. This is the very top of heaven, when saints shall be illightened with a clear and glorious sight of Christ as God; divines usually call it the beatifical vision.

3d. Wherein is the comprehensiveness of this expression, that *the beholding of Christ is our all in all?* I answer—

1. It comprehends the immediate seeing and looking upon all that majesty and glory which Jesus Christ hath.

2. It comprehends the enjoyment of Christ in his glory. Surely the saints shall not be mere idle spectators of the glory of Christ, but they shall enjoy him, and be taken into fellowship with him: It was said of Moses, that he did see the land of Canaan, but he was not admitted into it; it is otherwise with the saints, they shall see heaven, and they shall enter into heaven, *Come, thou faithful servant, and enter into thy master's joy;* not only behold it, but enter into it; they must behold Christ, and take possession of Christ, and enjoy him as their own. In this respect more especially is Christ our all in all. He is all in himself, and, if we enjoy him, he is all in all unto us.

CHAP. II.

Sect. I.—*Of Knowing Jesus as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation in his Second Coming.*

Let us know Jesus, carrying on the saints' salvation in his second coming, and taking them to heaven. Many excellent things are in this transaction; is it not of high concernment that he that now sits at God's right-hand interceding for us, should thence come again to judge the world, and after judgment take up the saints with him into glory? Cast thyself at the feet of Christ, and cry out, *O the depth of glory, and majesty, and goodness, and grace, in thee! O the riches of love, that thou shouldst let out thyself in these admirable dispensations!* Come, be exact in this study; gather up all the crumbs and filings of this gold; the least beams of the glory of Christ (especially as it shines and glitters at his second coming) having so much light, and love, and splendour in them! every part of this knowledge will be of special use and worth, yea, the low and imperfect knowledge of this mystery, of infinitely more value than the high and perfect knowledge of ten thousand things besides.

Sect. II.—*Of Considering Jesus in that respect.*

Let us consider Jesus, carrying on this great work of our salvation in his second coming. It is not enough to know, but we must meditate and seriously consider of it. When the understanding works seriously and spiritually, it will fetch things into sight, hold them there, and fasten upon them; so a man eyes Christ, till he have more of Christ, more of his presence, of his light, of his favour, and of his image. O let this be our work; let us consider Jesus in reference to his second coming to judgment. And that we may do it in order—

1. Consider Christ's preparing for judgment; realize it as if thou sawest or heardest the same; no sooner the time determined which God hath appointed, but Christ commands, 'Make ready, ye angels, souls that now are with me; it is the Father's pleasure, and it is my pleasure, to go down into the nether world, and to call before me all the men and women that ever lived in it; there will I pass my doom upon all flesh, and reward every one according to his works.' O what a shout may I imagine in heaven at this news! What joy is in the souls of saints, that now they must go to their bodies, and enter into them, that both their souls and bodies, which sometime lived together, may now dwell

together with Christ in glory, and never part more! If those that live on earth are commanded by Christ to *lift up their heads because their redemption draweth nigh;* how much more shall they joy in heaven, who also have *waited for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their bodies,* that now the long-looked for day is come! It is come! O the exultation of the angels at these tidings!

2. Consider Christ's coming to judgment; all now in readiness; the Son of God comes forth with all his glorious attendants; *For the Son of man shall come forth in the glory of his Father, with his angels,* and with the souls of saints, that for a time have been in paradise. O what a goodly sight is here! In this meditation I may see, with John, *the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.* Down comes Christ, and the angels, and spirits of the just made perfect: and as they come along, see how they shake the heavens, and dim and dark the very lights of heaven! see what a flood of fire goes before them! see how they pass into the cloud, where Christ makes a stand, and erects a throne for himself to sit on! Sure it will be a glorious cloud, when Christ with all his celestial servants shall sit upon it.

3. Consider Christ and the saints judging the rest of the world. No sooner are the saints sentenced, but Christ turns to the wicked, and bids them *go into everlasting fire;* in which sentence the saints shall join with Christ himself, *Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?* When the saints appear, it is not only by a summons, but with commission; not only to be judged, but to judge; not only shall they stand at Christ's right-hand, but they shall sit down on the throne of the Son of God, to judge the wicked angels and the world.

4. Consider Christ and his saints going up into heaven. No sooner hath he done his work with the world and sent them away, but he shall go with all his troops following him into heaven. Hath not Christ said so? *If I go away, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there you may be also.* O those songs of joy, and shouts of praise, that will fill the world at that day! and thus, as they go along, heaven opens unto them, and they enter in. What welcomes they have here, is past my telling.

1. It is *the day of adoption, and the redemption of our bodies.* It is the day of our sonship and deliverance; I deny not but that the saints are adopted and redeemed before this day; but this adoption and redemption is not consummate before Christ come again to judgment; then shall Christ say, *These are my sons whom I have redeemed; and as I have set them free, so now shall they live and reign with me for ever and ever.*

2. It is *the day of Christ's coming.* He was here not long since, travelling about the earth, and about our business; which

done, he went away to heaven, upon a special errand for his saints; and there now he is to intercede for them, to be their advocate; and withal there now he is to prepare their mansions for eternity. And no sooner shall he have dispatched his business there, but he will come for earth again; he will bow the heavens, and come down to give a report of his transactions there; hath he not left us a letter to that effect, *I will come again, and receive you to myself, that where I am, there you may be also?* O why are his chariots so long a-coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariots?

3. It is *the day of Christ's bright and glorious appearing.* When he was upon the earth, he appeared in our dress. Many then saw him, who said, *There is no beauty in him that we should desire him.* O! it was a sad sight to see him crowned with thorns, and scourged with whips, and nailed to the cross. But in his next appearing we shall see him in his best attire, arrayed in white, attended with the retinue of glory, riding in his chariot of light, and smiling upon all his saints. Now, is not this desirable? The apostle tells us of the saints' *looking for the glorious appearing of the great God, and of our Saviour, Jesus Christ;* therefore surely they desire it.

4. It is the *marriage-day of the Lamb.* The saints are betrothed to Christ, when first they believe in Christ; this is Christ's word, *I will betroth thee unto me, my sister, my spouse,* not my wife: thou art not yet married, only contracted here. But at that day the marriage of the Lamb will be complete, and then will the voice be heard, *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.* O the joy that Christ, and saints, and angels, and all that belong to heaven, will make at this marriage! *Blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!*

5. It is the *day of Christ's glory.* What glorious descriptions have we in scripture of Christ's coming to judgment; *The Son of man shall come from heaven with power and great glory;* and the work no sooner done, but he shall return again into heaven with power and great glory. Not to mention the essential glory of Christ, O the glory of Christ as mediator; all the glory that Ahasuerus could put upon his favourites, was nothing to this spiritual and heavenly glory, which the Father will put upon the Son; it is a glory above all the glories that ever were, or ever shall be; it is an eternal glory: not but that Christ shall at last give up his kingdom to his Father; he shall no more discharge the acts of an advocate or intercessor for us in heaven, only the glory of this shall always continue; it shall to all eternity be recorded that he was the mediator, and that he is the Saviour that hath brought us to life and immortality; and upon this ground the tongues of all the saints shall be employed to all eternity, to

celebrate this glory. This will be their everlasting song: *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen.* O what desire should the Spirit and the bride have to hear what Christ shall say to his angels, *Make ready for the journey, let us go down and divide the skies, and bow the heavens; I gather my prisoners of hope unto me, behold I come quickly to judge the nations!* I conclude this with the conclusion of the bible, *He that testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly, Amen. Even so: come Lord Jesus.*

Sect. III.—*Of Hoping in Jesus in that respect.*

Let us hope in Jesus as carrying on the great work of our salvation in his second coming; let us say, on certain grounds, *We hope Christ will come again, and receive us to himself, that where he is, there we may be also.*

Such an hope is a sure anchor, that will hold the ship in a storm; only because our souls lie upon it, we had need to look to it, that our hopes be true; the worst can say, 'They hope to be saved as well as the best;' but the hopes of many will be lamentably frustrated. To clear this point, that our hopes are right, and not counterfeit hopes, I shall lay down some signs, whereby we may know that Christ's coming is for us, and for our good, and for the grace that is to be given us at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

1. If we are born again, then will his glorious coming be, to glorify us: *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, to an inheritance incorruptible.* Come then, you that hope for glory, try yourselves; is there a change in your hearts, words, and lives? Is there a mighty work of grace upon your spirits? Are you experienced in the great mystery of regeneration? Why, here is your evidence that your hopes are sound, and that you shall sit upon thrones to judge the world.

2. If we long for his coming, then will he come to satisfy our longings: *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst, for they shall be satisfied;* how satisfied, but in being saved? *Christ was offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him, shall he appear the second time, without sin, to salvation:* unto them that look for him, or long for him, shall he appear the second time unto salvation; this *looking for Christ*, is in scripture a frequent description of a true believer in Christ. Who are sound Christians, but such as live in a perpetual desire and hope of Christ's blessed coming? They are *ever looking for, and hastening unto, the coming of the day of God.* Here are two signs in one verse, *looking for, and hastening unto;* true believers are not only in a

posture, looking for the coming of Jesus Christ, but also, as it were, going forth to meet Jesus Christ with burning lamps. Dost thou look and long for the coming of Christ in the clouds? These are firm grounds of an assured hope. Content not thyself with an hope of possibility, or probability; but reach out to that plerophory, or *full assurance of hope.* The hope of possibility is but a weak hope, the hope of probability is but a fluctuating hope, but the hope of certainty is a settled hope. Such an hope sweetens all the thoughts of God and Christ, of death and judgment, of heaven, yea, and of hell too, whilst we hope that we are saved from it. And are not the scriptures written to this very purpose, *that we might have this hope?* We are justified by his grace, *that we might be heirs in hope, heirs according to the hope of eternal life!* And was not this David's confidence, *Lord, I have hoped for thy salvation? Why* then *art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.*

Sect. IV.—*Of Believing in Jesus in that respect.*

Let us believe in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in his second coming.

Go to Christ, as coming again into this nether world to judge the quick and the dead. This is the last act of faith, in reference to Christ: *From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.* The coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the change of the living, the last judgment, and the glory of Christ with his saints to all eternity, is that transaction which must be dispatched at the end of the world: now this is the object of faith, as well as the former; Christ's work is not fully perfected, till all these be finished; nor is our work of faith fully completed, till it reach to the very last act of Christ in saving souls.—O what an excellent worker is Jesus Christ! He doth all his works thoroughly and perfectly. The greatest work that ever Christ undertook, was the work of redemption: that work would have broken men and angels, and yet Jesus Christ will carry it on to the end; and then will he say, not only prophetically, but expressly, *I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.*

1. Faith must principally and mainly look to the design and end of Christ in his second coming. Now the ends are—1. In respect of the wicked, that they may be destroyed, for he *must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet.* He shall come with flaming fire, and then he will *take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.* O the fear-

ful sounds that will then be heard! Sure that noise must needs be terrible, when millions of men and women at the same instant shall fearfully cry out, and when their cries shall mingle with the thunders of the dying and groaning heavens, and with the crack of the dissolving world, when the whole fabric of nature shall shake into dissolution and eternal ashes: *Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you.*

2. In respect of the godly, that they may be saved, that they may see and enjoy Christ to all eternity. This is a main end of Christ's coming: *I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.*—And, *Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold the glory which thou hast given me.*

3. In respect of Christ himself, that he may be glorified. Now in two things more especially will he be glorified at that day: 1. In his justice. 2. In his mercy.

1. His justice will be glorified, especially, in punishing the wicked: on earth little justice is done on most offenders; though some public crimes are sometimes punished, yet the actions of the closets and chambers, the designs and thoughts of men, the business of retirement, and of the night, escape the hand of justice; and therefore God hath so ordained it, that there shall be a day, wherein all that are let alone by men, shall be questioned by God; then all thoughts shall be examined, and secret actions viewed on each side, and the infinite number of those sins which escaped here, shall be blazoned there. O how will God glorify his justice at that day! Surely his justice shall shine, and be eminently glorious, in every passage.

2. His mercy will be glorified in rewarding the saints. And this is the main, the supreme end of his coming to judgment, *He shall come* (saith the apostle,) *to be glorified in his saints;* not but that the angels shall glorify the riches of his grace, as well as saints, but because the angels never sinned, *(they have now kept their robes of innocency above five thousand years, without one spark of dirt, or change of colour;)* therefore the glory of his grace is more especially fastened on saints, that sometime were sinners. Is not this their everlasting song, which they begin at this day, *Glory to the Lamb, and glory to his grace, that sitteth on the throne for evermore?*

Thus for directions; one word of application, or a few motives to work faith in you in this respect.

1. Christ in his word invites you to believe; these are his letters from heaven: *Come all to the marriage supper of the Lamb! Ho every one that thirsts, come in;* heaven's gate is open to all that knock, but fools, foolish virgins, foolish souls, which have no faith, nor will have any, to render them fit for heaven. There is Rahab the harlot, and Manasseh the murderer, and

Mary that had so many devils. A man that hath many devils may come where there is not one. Ah! poor soul, why dost thou make exceptions, where God makes none? Why shouldest thou exclude thyself out of these golden gates, when God doth not? Believe, only *believe in the Lord Jesus*, and the promise is sure, and without all controversy, *thou shalt be saved.*

2. Christ, by his ministry, entreats you to believe. Come, say they, we beseech you believe in your judge! It may be you startle at this. What! to believe in him who is a-coming to be your judge? But if your judge be Jesus, if the same person who died for you, shall come to judge you, why should you fear? Indeed if your judge were your enemy, you might fear; but if he, who is your Lord, and who loves your souls, shall judge you, there is no such cause. Will a man fear to be judged by his dearest friend? a brother by a brother? a child by a father? or a wife by her husband? Consider! Is not he your judge, who came down from heaven, and who being on earth was judged, condemned, and executed, in your stead? And yet are ye fearful, *O ye of little faith.*

3. Christ by his Spirit moves, excites, and provokes you to believe. Sometimes in reading, and sometimes in hearing, and sometimes in meditating, you may feel him stir. Have you felt no gale of the Spirit all this while? *It is the Spirit that convinceth the world of sin*, especially of that great sin of unbelief: and then of righteousness, which Christ procured by going to his Father. Observe here, it is the work of the Spirit thus to convince, so that all moral philosophy, and the wisest directions of the most civil men, will leave you in a wilderness; yea, ten thousands of sermons may be preached to you to believe, and yet you never shall, till you are overpowered by God's Spirit. It is the Spirit that enlightens and directs you, as occasion is, *saying, This is the way, walk in it.* It is the Spirit that rouseth and awakeneth you by his effectual motions, *Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away. He stands at the door, and knocks;* if while I press you to *believe in Jesus,* you feel the Spirit in his stirrings, surely it concerns you to believe, it concerns you to yield, it concerns you to co-operate with the Spirit; say with him in the gospel, *I believe, Lord, help my unbelief:* I believe what? 'I believe, when Jesus comes again, he will receive me to himself, and I shall be for ever with the Lord.' Amen, Amen.

Sect. V.—*Of Loving Jesus in that respect.*

Let us love Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in his second coming. In prosecution of this, I must first set down Christ's love to us, and then our love to Christ.

1. Christ will come. Is not this love? As his departure was a rich testimony of his love, *It is expedient for you that I go away;*

so is his returning, *I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you;* O how can we think of Christ's returning, and not meditate on the greatness of his love? Might he not send his angels, but he must come himself? O the love of Christ in this one act, he will come again; he is but gone for a while, but he will come again in his own person.

2. Christ will welcome all his saints into his presence; and is not this love? After he is come down from heaven, he stays for them a while in the clouds; and commanding his angels to bring them thither, anon they come; and O how his heart springs within him at their coming!

3. Christ will sentence his saints to eternal life; here is love indeed! every word of the sentence is full of love; it contains the reward of his saints, a reward beyond their work, and beyond their wages, and beyond their promise, and beyond their thoughts, and beyond their understanding: it is a participation of the joys of God, and of the inheritance of the Judge himself. Never was more love expressed in words, than Christ expresseth in this sentence, *Come, ye blessed,* &c.

4. Christ will take up all his saints with him into glory; where he will present them to his Father, and then be their all in all to all eternity. This is the height of Christ's love; this is the immediate love that comes out from the precious heart and bowels of Jesus Christ.

5. And if Christ love thus; how should we love again for such a love? Can we love as high, as deep, as broad, as long, as love itself, or as Christ himself? No, no; all we can do is but to love a little; and O that, in the consideration of his love, we could love a little in sincerity! O that we were but able feelingly to say, *Lord, I love thee, I feel I love thee, even as I feel I love my friend, or as I feel I love myself. O thou who art the element or sun of love, come with thy power, let out one beam, one ray, one gleam of love upon my soul; shine hot upon my heart; remember thy promise to circumcise my heart, that I may love the Lord my God with all my heart, and with all my soul!*

Sect. VI.—*Of Joying in Jesus in that respect.*

Let us joy in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in his second coming. Christ delights to have his people look upon him with delight; for a soul to be always under the spirit of bondage, and so to look upon Christ as a judge, a lion, or an offended God, it doth not please God. The Lord Jesus is tender of the joy of his saints: *Rejoice, and be exceeding glad,* saith Christ; *Rejoice evermore,—Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice. Let the righteous be glad, let them rejoice before God; yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.* All that Christ doth to his saints tends to this joy, as the upshot or end of all: if he

cast down, it is but to raise them up; if he humble, it is but to exalt; if he kill, it is but to make alive; in every dispensation, still he hath a tender care to preserve their joy. If you find it an hard thing to joy in Jesus, in reference to his second coming, think of these motives,—

1. Christ's coming is the Christian's encouragement; so Christ himself lays it down: *You shall see the Son of man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory; and when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.* The signs of his coming, are the hopes of your approaching glory; and what should we do then, but prepare for it with exceeding joy? Many evils now surround you every where; Satan hath his snares, and the world its baits, and your own hearts are apt to betray you into your enemies' hands; but when Christ comes, you shall have full deliverance, and perfect redemption; and therefore *look up and lift up your heads.* The apostle speaks the very same encouragement: *The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air,—wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

2. Christ will lead us into glory. As the bridegroom, after nuptials, leads his bride to his own home, that there they may live together: so Christ, our royal bridegroom, will lead us into the palace of his glory. And is not this joy of our Lord enough to cause our joy? O what welcomes shall we have in this city! There shall we see Christ in his garden, there shall we be set as a seal on Christ's arm, and as a seal upon his heart; there shall we be filled with his love, enlightened with his light, encircled in his arms, following his steps, and praising his name, and admiring his glory! there shall be joy indeed, *For in thy presence there is fulness of joy, and at thy right-hand there are pleasures evermore.*

Sect. VII.—*Of Calling on Jesus in that respect.*

Let us call on Jesus, as carrying on our souls' salvation at his second coming.

1. Let us pray for the coming of Christ; this was the constant prayer of the church, *Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. The Spirit and the bride say, Come.* Well knows the bride that the day of Christ's coming is her wedding day, the day of presenting her unto his Father, and therefore no wonder if she pray for the hastening of it: *Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart;—thy kingdom come.*

2. Let us praise him for his coming. Our engagement to Christ is so great, that we can never enough extol his name; at

that day the books shall be opened, and why not the book of our engagements to Jesus Christ? I can surely tell you it is written full; the page and margin, both within and without. O then let our hearts be full of praises; let us join with those blessed elders that fell down before the Lamb, and sung, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*

Sect. VIII.—*Of Conforming to Jesus in that respect.*

Let us conform to Jesus, as coming again to judge the world. *Looking unto Jesus,* contains this. When the apostle would persuade Christians to patience under the cross, he lays down first the cloud of witnesses, all the martyrs of the church of Christ; and secondly, Jesus Christ himself is of more virtue than all the rest.

But how should we conform to Christ in this respect? I answer:—

1. Christ will prepare for judgment. O! let us at all times prepare for his judging of us; doth it not concern us to prepare for him, as well as it concerns him to prepare for us? If Christ come, and find us careless, negligent, unprepared, what will become of us? The very thought of Christ's sudden coming to judgment, might well put us into a waiting, watching posture, that we might be still in readiness. It cannot be long, and, alas, what is a little time when it is gone! is it not high time then to prepare our lamps, to trim our souls, to watch, and fast, and pray, and meditate, and to remember that for all our deeds, good or evil, God will bring us to judgment? O! let us against his coming prepare for him!

2. Christ at his coming will summon all his saints to arise, and to come to him in the clouds. Let us summon our souls to arise, and to go to Christ in the heavens. What Christ will do really at that day, let us do spiritually on this day. Alas! we had need to be continually stirring up the gifts and graces that are in us. It is the Lord's pleasure that we should daily come to him, he would have us on the wing of prayer, and on the wing of meditation, and on the wing of faith; he would have us to be still arising, mounting up in divine contemplation to his majesty.

3. Christ will at the last judge all our souls, and judge all the wicked to eternal flames; O let us judge ourselves, that we may not be judged of the Lord: but in what manner should we judge ourselves? I answer:—

(1.) We must search out our sins. *Winnow yourselves, O people, not worthy to be beloved.* There should be a strict scrutiny, to find out all the profaneness of our hearts and lives, all our sins against light, and love, and checks, and vows; *Winnow*

yourselves. If you will not, I pronounce to you from the eternal God, that ere long the Lord will come in the clouds, and then will he open the book wherein all your sins are written; he will search Jerusalem with candles, he will come with a sword in his hand, to search out all secure sinners every where, and then will all your sins be discovered to all the world.

(2.) We must confess our sins before the Lord; we must spread them before the Lord, as Hezekiah did his letter; only in our confessions, observe these rules; as,—

[1.] Our confession must be full of sorrow, *I will declare my iniquity* (saith David,) *I will be sorry for my sin.*

[2.] Our confession must be a full confession; we must pour it out. Thus David styles one of his psalms, *A prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the Lord.* We must pour out our complaints, as a man poureth water out of a vessel: *Arise, cry out in the night, in the beginning of the watches; pour out thine heart, like water, before the face of the Lord.* Water runs all out of a vessel; when you turn the mouth downward, never a spoonful will stay behind: so should we pour out our hearts before God, and (if it were possible) leave not a sin unconfessed, at least for the kinds, if not for the particular sins.

[3.] Our confession must be with full aggravation; we should aggravate our sins by all the circumstances, that they may shew them odious:—O, my sins were out of measure sinful; they were sins against knowledge, and light, against many mercies received, against many judgments threatened, against many checks of conscience, against many vows and promises; thus oft, and in this place, and at that time, and in that manner, I committed these and these sins: but of all the aggravations, let us be sure to remember how we sinned against the goodness, and patience, and love, and mercy of God; surely these circumstances will make our sins out of measure sinful. Say, 'O my God, thou art my Father; was I ever in want, and thou didst not relieve me? Was I ever in weakness, and thou didst not strengthen me? Was I ever in straits, and thou didst not deliver me? Was I ever in sickness, and thou didst not cure me? Was I ever in misery, and thou didst not succour me? Hast thou not been a gracious God to me? All my bones can say, Who is like unto thee? Lord, who is like unto thee? And shall I thus and thus reward the Lord for all his mercies towards me? Hear, O heavens, and hearken, O earth; sun, stand thou still, and, thou moon, be thou amazed at this! hear angels, and hear devils; hear heaven, and hear hell; and be you avenged on such a sin as this is!'

4. We must condemn ourselves, or pass sentence against our souls; 'Lord, the worst place in hell is too good for me; Lord, here is my soul, thou mayest, if thou pleasest, send Satan for it, and give me a portion among the damned.'

5. We must plead pardon, and cry mightily to God in Christ, for the remission of all our sins. This is the way of judging ourselves; we see nothing but hell and damnation in ourselves, but then we fling down ourselves at God's gate of mercy. We despair not in God, though in ourselves. God in Christ is gracious and merciful, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin; and hence we make bold to entreat the Lord for Christ's sake to be merciful to us. 'Lord, pardon, Lord forgive, for thy name's sake, promise sake, mercy's sake, and for the Lord Jesus' sake: O let free grace have his work; Lord, glorify thy name, and glorify the riches of thy grace in saving us.'

6. Christ at his coming will be glorified in his saints; not only in himself, but in his saints also; whose glory, as it comes from him, so it will redound to him. O let him now be glorified in us, let us now in some high way conform to the image of his glory, let us look unto Christ till we are like Christ, not only in grace, but in glory; and this glory, as it comes from him, so let it redound to him. Let us so *behold the glory of the Lord in the glass of the gospel, as that we may be changed into the same image from glory to glory,* from a lesser measure to an higher measure of glory.

O that something of the glory of Christ might rest upon us! O that having this glory in our thoughts, we could now feel a change from glory to glory! Is it so, that the Lord Jesus will be glorified in all his saints? And shall we have inglorious souls? base and unworthy affections and conversations? Or shall we content ourselves with a little measure of grace? O be we holy, even as he is holy; let our conversation be heavenly, let us purify ourselves even as he is pure; let us resemble him in some high measure of grace. And, lastly, let us glorify him in bodies and spirits; all our glory is from him; and therefore let all our glory redound to him; let us now begin that gospel tune of the eternal song of free grace, which one day we shall more perfectly chant in glory; *Alleluiah!* and again *Alleluiah!* and *Amen, Alleluiah! salvation, and glory, and power, and praise, and thanksgiving, and obedience be unto him that sits on the throne, the Lamb blessed for ever and ever. Amen.*

Now all is done, shall I speak a word for Christ, or rather for ourselves in relation to Christ; if I had but one word more to speak in the world, it should be this. O let all our spirits be taken up with Christ! Surely Christ is enough to fill all our thoughts, desires, hopes, loves, joys, or whatever is within us, or without us. Christ alone comprehends all the circumference of all our happiness. O the worth of Christ! Compare we other things with him, and they will bear no weight at all; cast into the balance with him angels, they are wise, but he is wisdom; cast into the balance with him men, they are liars, lighter than vanity, but Christ is *the amen, the faithful witness;* cast into the

scales kings, and all kings, and all their glory; cast in two worlds, and add to the weight millions of heavens of heavens, and the balance cannot down, the scales are unequal; Christ outweighs all. Shall I yet come nearer home? What is heaven, but to be with Christ? What is life eternal, but to believe in God, and in his Son Jesus Christ? Where may we find peace with God, and reconciliation with God, but only in Christ? All the goodness of God comes out of God through this golden pipe, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is true, those essential attributes of love, grace, mercy, and goodness, are only in God, and they abide in God, yet the mediatory manifestation of love, grace, mercy, and goodness, is only in Christ. Christ alone is the treasury, storehouse, magazine, of the free goodness and mercy of the Godhead. In him we are justified, sanctified, saved. *He is the way, the truth, and the life;* he is honour, riches, beauty, health, peace, and salvation; all the spiritual blessings wherewith we are enriched, are in and by Christ: God hears our prayers by Christ; God forgives our iniquities through Christ; all we have, and all we expect to have, hangs only on Christ; he is the golden hinge, upon which all our salvation turns.

O how should all hearts be taken with this Christ! Christians, turn your eyes upon the Lord; *Look, and look again unto Jesus.* Shall I speak one word more to thee that believest? Remember how he came out of his Father's bosom for thee, wept for thee, bled for thee, poured out his life for thee, is now risen for thee, gone to heaven for thee, sits at God's right-hand, and rules all the world for thee, makes intercession for thee, and at the end of the world will come again for thee, and receive thee to himself, to live with him for ever and ever. Surely if thus thou believest, and livest, thy life is comfortable, and thy death will be sweet; if there be any heaven upon earth, thou wilt find it in the practice and exercise of this gospel duty, in *Looking unto Jesus.*

THE END.

THE

MINISTRATION OF

AND

COMMUNION WITH ANGELS.

CHAP. I.

SECT. I.—*Are they not all Ministering Spirits, sent forth to minister for them, who shall be heirs of salvation,* Heb. i. 14.

THE COHERENCE AND DIVISION OF THE WORDS.

THE apostle is here making a comparison betwixt Christ and the angels. As the world is wonderfully inclined to superstition, so it is wont many times to darken the glory of Christ, by too much exalting of angels: good reason it is therefore that they should be put in their place; the angels are excellent, but Christ more excellent; the angels are glorious, but Christ more glorious: now the prelation of Christ before the angels, the apostle proves by several arguments: as, 1. From the name of Christ: he is called God's Son; so are not the angels. 2. From the rule and dominion of Christ: he is the head and prince; so are not the angels. 3. From the office and place of Christ: 'He sits at God's right-hand,' *(i. e.)* he hath the second place given him after the Father, he is the Father's lieutenant, or his chief ambassador, to exercise all power: so are not the angels; and therefore it follows that Christ is more excellent and glorious than them all. Indeed they are spirits, and therein they have a title of great excellency given them; but they are ministering spirits, and that takes off, and holds them within the compass of their degree; if they but minister, they must needs be inferior to Christ, who is Lord over all: and though it may be objected, that Christ is sometimes called a minister, and that 'he came to minister;' yet that is not in regard of need, but of good will; the angels do

it of necessity, but Christ voluntarily: it is natural in the angels, but only by accident in Jesus Christ; and therefore in all things Christ hath the pre-eminence. Yet let not this doctrine pass without some consolation to the saints and people of God; be it known to you, that as angels are ministering spirits, so they are sent forth to minister for you; 'Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?'

You see I had need to be careful what I say of the angels; lest that honour which should be given to God and Christ, may in any sort redound to them. This hath been the error of former ages; and of all errors there is almost none more ancient than this. Paul himself had much to do with some, who so advanced the angels, that in a manner they would have brought Christ under subjection; *Let no man beguile you of your reward* (saith he) *in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels.* Indeed there shines in them such a brightness of the majesty of God, that there is nothing whereunto we are more easily drawn, than with a certain admiration to fall down in worshipping of them; this very thing John in the Revelation confesseth of himself, but he addeth withal, that he received this answer, *See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus; worship God*—there is no worshipping of angels: and yet we must not throw away the comfortable doctrine of angels; I hope before I have done to convince you of a wonderful pledge of Christ's love to your persons in the administration of angels,—*Are they not all administering spirits, &c.*

In this text is a description of angels; wherein, 1. Of their nature, *Are they not spirits?* 2. Of their office, *Are they not ministering spirits?* 3. Of their conjunction in this office, *Are they not all ministering spirits?* 4. Of their commission and execution of this office so undertaken, *Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister?* 5. Of the object about which the execution of their office is most conversant, *Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?*

Sect. II.—*Of the several Doctrines deduced from the words.*

From every part I may deduce a several doctrine; as, 1. That *the angels are spirits.* 2. That *the office of the angels is to minister and serve.* 3. That *the highest angel is not exempted from this office.* 4. That *they have their commission from God and Christ to execute their office of ministration.* 5. That *the ministering office of the angels is not for all, but only for heaven's heirs.* On the four first I shall only give a touch, but on the last I shall insist, and (if the Lord help) enlarge my discourse to the full of my design.

CHAP. II.

Sect. I.—*Of the First Doctrine.*

The *angels are spirits;* and so is God, and so are the souls of men, but with this difference, God is a spirit most simple, without any composition at all: the souls of men are spirits conjoined with flesh and blood; thus the philosopher describes the soul to be the act of the body: now betwixt these two spirits are the angels, who are neither without all composition, as God is; nor are they covered with flesh and blood, as the soul of man is. I know it is a question, whether the angels have bodies? And,

1. The Peripatetics and school-men are for the negative; 'The angels,' say they 'are altogether incorporeal;' and for this opinion are brought in by others these very texts, 'Who maketh his angels spirits,'—and 'Are they not all ministering spirits?'

2. The Platonists and many of the ancients are on the other side: 'The angels have their proper bodies,' saith Tertullian, and, although invisible to us, yet visible to God. Augustine is of the same mind: and herein, saith Lombard, he followed many famous authors, as all the Platonics, Origen, Lactantius, Basil, with all the writers almost of his time: and some more modern agree with them herein; All spirits have their bodies, saith Bernard, as need is, excepting only God himself; and the need that the angels have, he proves from his text, 'Are they not all ministering spirits? For how can they execute their ministry,' saith he, 'without a body, especially amongst them that are in the body? Besides, they could not discourse, nor move from place to place, without a body.' Nor speaks he of bodies assumed, but of bodies proper and peculiar to themselves.

Methinks a middle betwixt both these comes nearest truth, 'That in comparison of God they are bodies, but in comparison of us they are pure and mighty spirits.' Certainly the angels are not simply spirits, as God is, who is a spirit most simple, without any composition at all; nor are they infinite or immense, as God is, but are terminated in their dimensions, and move from place to place as bodies do. Hence Zanchy approves rather of the ancients, than of the school-men, 'that angels are not simply and altogether incorporeal; only their bodies,' saith he, 'are not earthly, nor airy, nor heavenly, as the Stoics would have them, for all such bodies were created of that chaos, *Gen.* i. 1. but rather, as the imperial heaven is a corporeal substance far different from these nether heavens visible to us, so the angels, made together with that heaven, are corporeal substances, far purer and more subtile, than either earth, or air, or fire, or the matter of these visible heavens.' I will not say they are of the

same body, but they may have like bodies to that glorious body of the highest heaven, or seat of the blessed; and so in respect of us, or of our gross bodies, they may be called pure and mighty Spirits.

CHAP. III.

Of the Second Doctrine.

The office of the angels is to minister and serve; it is true, they are called principalities, powers, mights, thrones, dominions; so the apostle speaks of Christ, that *he was set at God's right-hand in heavenly places, far above all principalities, and powers, and might, and dominion. And by him were all things created in heaven, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers:* by all which, though we understand not divers dignities of angels, whereby in nature they excel one another, yet we must needs understand the dignity, excellency, authority, and power, of every one of the angels.

And yet this hinders not, but that these mighty powers are *ministering spirits;* and therefore in other places of scripture we find other titles given to them; as sometimes they are called watchers, *I saw in the visions of my head, and behold a watcher, and an Holy One came down from heaven.* And sometimes they are called soldiers, 'And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of heavenly soldiers, (or of the *heavenly host*) praising God.' Most frequently they are called angels, which is not a name of their nature, but of their office; the word signifies a messenger, as if they were ever running errands betwixt heaven and earth: So 'Jacob dreamed of a ladder set on earth, whose top reached to heaven, and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.' Now this is clear, that watchers, soldiers, and messengers, are but ministers and servants. If it be demanded what is their ministry, or service? It is either to God, or to men; in respect of God, they are said *to do his commandments, to hearken to the voice of his word, to behold the face of God, to celebrate the praises of God, and of Jesus Christ;* and in respect of men, they do them many offices of love and service, which we shall discover in the last point, for *are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister unto them* (I say, unto them) *who shall be heirs of salvation.*

CHAP. IV.

Of the Third Doctrine.

The highest angel is not exempted from this office. Are they not all ministering spirits? It is not one, nor ten, nor an hundred, nor a thousand, but all angels and archangels, principalities and powers, thrones and dominions, are 'all ministering spirits.' A question there is, 1. Of the order of angels; and if that be admitted, 2. Whether the chief of that order may be considered as ministering spirits?

For the first, Dionysius (I will not say the Areopagite) tells of nine orders, because of nine words in the scripture relating to the angels, as seraphims, cherubims, thrones, powers, hosts, dominions, principalities, archangels, and angels; and at large he describes their several natures, distinctions, and properties, as, that the first three orders are for immediate attendance on the Almighty; and the next three orders, for the general government of the creatures; and the last three orders, for the particular good of God's elect; that the archangels surpass the beauty of angels ten times, principalities surpass the archangels twenty times, powers surpass the principalities forty times, &c. How he, or any other, came to this learning, is yet unknown, yet hath this hierarchy, in these several orders, passed for current through many ages of the church.

Learned Mede, in his Diatribæ of the Angels, tells of seven principal angels, which minister before the throne of God, and therefore are called archangels, some of whose names we have in scripture, as, Michael, Gabriel, Raphael; to this purpose he cites several texts: *As I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, which stand and minister before the glory of the Holy One.* And, *These seven are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth.* And, *I saw,* saith John, *seven lamps before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God; and I beheld, and lo in the midst of the throne stood a Lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth.* And, *I saw the seven angels which stood before God.* And the archangel Gabriel speaks of himself to Zacharias in the very same language, *I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God.*

That there is order amongst the angels, I do not doubt; God is the God of order, and as he orders all things below, so no question he observeth a most exact order in the court of heaven: amongst us, some are superior and some inferior, some greater and others lesser; equality hath no place either on earth, or in hell; and in this visible heaven, *one star,* saith the apostle, *differs*

from another in glory: how then should we imagine any disorder or confusion to be in heaven? Certainly there is a most beautiful distinction and order amongst the blessed angels, yet I am apt to think, and do believe, that the difference of those glorious spirits in heaven, is not in their nature, but in their offices: for as among men there is a parity and equality in the respect of nature, and the excellency of one above another is but by accident; so it is with angels, they are equally spiritual substances, all equally created good, and pure, and perfect, and their imparity is because of the divers kinds of their offices, wherein they are employed: Hence, 'some are simply called angels, some archangels, some principalities, some dominions,' &c.

But, 2. admitting this order and distinction of angels, whether are not the highest angels ministering spirits? The Platonists that first divided them into three orders, as, some above heaven, called supercelestes; others in heaven, called celestes; and others under heaven, called subcelestes—do suitably give them several offices; as, 1. They above heaven (I mean this visible heaven) continually stand before God (as they say) praising, and lauding, and magnifying his name. 2. They in heaven are there seated, to move, and rule, and govern the stars. 3. They under heaven, are some to rule kingdoms, others provinces, others cities, others particular men. Many Christians, that write of the hierarchy of the angels, follow these opinions. Now, by this surmise, the highest angels do not minister to the saints, but only and immediately to God himself. But on the contrary, did not 'Michael,' one of the seven, 'contend with Satan about the body of Moses?' And was not Gabriel, 'who stands before the presence of God,' sent to speak to Zacharias, and to Mary, and to shew the glad tidings of the gospel? And were not those seven archangels, called, *seven eyes, and the seven spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth?* Surely then neither seraphims, nor cherubims, nor thrones, nor powers, are exempted from this office, they are all *ministering spirits.*

CHAP. V.

Sect. I.—*Of the Fourth Doctrine.*

They *have their commission from God and Christ, to execute their office of ministration;* they will not go, unless sent forth: as Christ would not do the office of mediator until he was called, Heb. v. 4, 5. so neither will the angels execute their office without a call: in this respect, the angels are said to wait on Christ, they stand behind him, and receive deputations to their several

offices: *I saw by night, and behold a man—and behind him were there red horses, speckled and white,* (i. e.) *ministering spirits, prepared for judgment and mercy.* When Zachary knew not who they were, the man that stood among the myrtle trees, Christ (the captain of the Lord's host) answered and said, *These are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth:* The Lord first sends them, and then, as agents and spies, they give intelligence of all things done in the world: they will not stir without a commission; but if he sends them, they run, they fly. *I saw the Lord sitting on his throne,* saith Micaiah, *and all the host of heaven standing by him, on his right-hand, and on his left; and the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner; and there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also; go forth, and do so.* All this discourse is by way of resemblance: as it is with kings and princes, so it is said of God, all his host (good and bad angels) stand about him, and receive their commisions from him: no sooner is any design agreed on, but he gives out the word of command, *go forth, and do so.* See here the commission, *go forth,* said God: *are they not all ministering spirits sent forth,* said the apostle.

Sect. II.—*A Transition to the last Point.*

On these four several doctrines, I have no mind to insist, and the rather, because they are so very speculative, and so full of controversy: for my part, I shall never forget what Graserus said he had found in his visiting the sick, and in his own preparations for well dying,—that most of the controversies in divinity were utterly useless, and did entangle the consciences of the simple, just as the human inventions in popery formerly did; and therefore he begun with full bent of mind to shun or abhor them, and in his public preaching to propound only those things which tended to the kindling of true faith in Christ, and to the exercise of true godliness, according to the word of God, and to the procuring of true consolation both in life and death: nor shall I forget what is writ of Abraham Buchaltzer, whose care in his public ministry was to avoid those questions that do but gender unto strife, and to instruct his auditors how to live well and die well. Some indeed blamed him of cowardice, for that being endowed by God with such excellent abilities, yet he would never enter into the lists with the fanatic adversaries of those times; but the reason was, because he always affected peace, having no delight in wrangling, which caused him to say to a friend, *Desii*

disputare, cæpi supputare, quonium illud dissipationem, hoc collectionem significat. Besides, he saw that the greatest antagonists to the church's peace had not so much as one spark of grace in them; and that there came no profit, but much hurt, to the church of Christ, by those continual quarrels amongst divines. I will not deny, nay, I dare not but acknowledge, that in our pulpits we may, and must (as occasion is) propound such a subject as this of the angels, and no question but out of it we may draw matter for faith, and life, and comfort: but as to these particulars of the angels, that they are spirits, ministers of several orders, and all delegated (as the Lord pleaseth) to this or that office, they are very abstruse points, wherein we may wrangle, and do as boys in sport, who strive to strike most sparks out of their flints, but never intend to kindle thereby for use; so we may dispute and jangle about words, or strive to strike out the most subtile and finest-spun notions that we can invent, but, alas, they will not profit our souls, nor tend much to practice, which is the life and spirit of religion: upon this I verily believe it is, that we have far less written in God's word of the nature of angels, than of God himself; because the knowledge of God is far more practical, and less controversial, and more necessary to salvation, than the knowledge of angels or archangels; only if there be any thing of angels revealed in scripture, and most worthy of our knowledge, (as certainly there is,) I take that to be it, which the school-men in all their learning took the least notice of, and that is, of the ministration of angels in reference to God's people: with this one use, saith Zanchius, could the apostle content himself, as knowing that, in the doctrine of angels, this was the most principal, and indeed most practical; and therefore on this point I mean to enlarge, and the other points I shall leave to others.

CHAP. VI.

Sect. I.—*Of the last Doctrine.*

The chief point yet remains, viz. that *this ministering office of the angels is not for all, but only for heaven's heirs:* on this I mean to insist, and to enlarge my discourse; wherein I shall, 1. Confirm, 2. Apply. 1. For confirmation, we have scripture and reason.

Sect. II.—*Scriptures for Angels' Ministration.*

He *shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways; they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.*

In this scripture we may observe these particulars,—

1. That the elect are so precious with God, that for their sakes he gives out commands.

2. That he commands the angels (his choice and chief servants) for the good of his chosen: *he shall give his angels charge over thee.* It is the usual way of his providence, to command the strong in behalf of the weak, and commend the weak to those that are more strong: thus it is between children and parents, wives and husbands, the sick and sound, the saints and angels; he commands the angels over saints, or he commends the saints unto his angels.

3. That the end or meaning of the command, is for the elect's custody, *to keep thee:* they must not exercise a power or dominion over them, they must not exact adoration or worship from them, as the evil spirits do from all their followers; but the command is to preserve them, defend them, and deliver them, keep them.

4. That the keeping of saints is limited to their ways, *they shall keep thee in all thy ways:* i. e. in all thy necessary lawful ways, not in thy sinful devious wanderings.

5. That the obedience of the angels to this command, is precise, exact, and diligent, *they shall bear thee up in their hands,* i. e. they shall accompany thee, go before thee, wait upon thee, follow thee, as the shadow follows the body, compass thee round, lead thee, observe thee, and in all straits or necessities lend thee an hand.

6. That the issue of this obedience is safety and security; *lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.* By this one danger we understand, by a synecdoche, all other dangers; q. d. not any hurt, be it never so little, shall befall the elect: so far shall they be from harm in the head, that it shall not reach the foot; indeed neither foot nor head, nor an hair of their head, shall perish to their prejudice, Luke 21. 28.

The sum of all this is. As nurses and mothers deal with their children, so must the angels deal with the children of God, that is, they must keep them in their ways, they must bear them up in their hands: children often stumble and fall, unless they be led and carried in hands and arms; and therefore God hath given his angels a charge over his children, to keep them, and carry them as in arms, lest they dash their feet against the stones.

The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them: they that sometimes are compared to nurses and mothers, are other whiles compared to soldiers that encamp themselves about the saints; thus, when the young man had his eyes opened at Elisha's prayer, he saw, and *behold the mountain was full of horses, and chariots of fire, round about Elisha.* Many military services are they ever and anon per-

forming for the saints; they are watchful centinels, giving a timely alarm to prevent the enemy: *Arise, and take the babe and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be their until I bring thee word, for Herod will seek the babe to destroy him.* They are faithful life-guards, preserving the saints in the midst of dangers: *There shall no evil befal thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling, for he shall give his angels charge over thee.* They are safe convoys, bringing the saints through their wilderness to their heavenly Canaan. Jacob had experience thereof: *And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him; and when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host; and he called the name of that place Mahanaim,* i. e. two hosts or camps, the one before and the other behind, or the one on one side, and the other on the other side; or they placed themselves in such sort, as to give Jacob assurance of safety every way.

Sect. III.—*Reasons for Angels' Ministration.*

But why should they minister for the saints? The reasons are, 1. In respect of God. 2. In respect of them. 3. In respect of us.

1. There are some reasons in respect of God: as,—

1. It is his will and pleasure that they should so minister. Thus Nebuchadnezzar could acknowledge, *He doth according to his will in the army of heaven.* The Lord's will is the rule of all justice, and a most perfect law, whereby he governs the army of heaven, that is, the angels: hence they are described to be God's ministers that do his pleasure; they inquire no further what is to be done, or why it should be done, but acquiesce in the discovery of his will and pleasure. Indeed all things and actions are resolved into this first principle, the good pleasure of his will; *He worketh all things after the counsel of his will.* This is the supreme reason.

2. It is his command that they should so minister; every thing that God wills, he doth not command; he wills sin to be in the world, but he doth not command it, for then he would be the author of sin; but as for angel-ministration, he wills and commands them to it: *Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word:* upon this ground is the Lord very often called, the Lord of hosts, i. e. the Lord of angels, for so Jacob called the two armies of angels, God's *host;* and the multitude of angels that praised God at Christ's nativity, are called a multitude of the *heavenly hosts.* Look, as commanders say to their soldiers, go, and they go; so saith God to his angels, go, and they go; go and minister to my saints, and presently they minister.

3. It is goodness that they should so minister. Alas, if the Lord should deal with us according to our demerits, rather tigers

and dragons should wait upon us, than the angels: it is more than we can challenge, that any creature after the fall should be serviceable unto us; but that all the hosts of heaven should be abased to so low a work, as to be sent forth to minister for the meanest saint, even for us poor sinful wretches, dust and ashes, Oh! what goodness is this! Upon this account, of the love, mercy, and goodness of God, we read so often of the Lord's sending his angels to attend his saints: thus Abraham told his servant, *The Lord, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee:* And thus God told Moses, *I will send an angel before thee:* And thus Daniel told the king, *My God hath sent his angel and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me.* So gracious is that King of heaven, that he will spare his own courtiers out of heaven, and send them on errands to his saints for their preservation; whence David reasons, *Oh taste and see that the Lord is good!* Oh the goodness of God!

2. There are other reasons in respect of the angels: as,—

1. It is their duty; not the brightest angel but is subordinate unto God, and therefore must act and move as the Lord appoints: *This is the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel, and I knew that they were the cherubims.* The cherubims are glorious angels, of great wisdom, strength, and agility, and yet they are subservient to the Lord, and therefore are said to be under the God of Israel: Surely that word of the psalmist, *they do his pleasure,* is the very image of true obedience, *q. d.* they minister not at their own pleasure, but at God's: now what is God's pleasure, but the saints' welfare? *He hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servants.* The angels, that know this, stand not upon terms with God, all they do is but to hearken to the voice of his word, and then they fly: *then did the cherubims lift up their wings, and the wheels beside them.* It is a note of a divine upon these words; 'All things are under the God of Israel, he hath the pre-eminence, he is above wheels, and angels are under him, at his disposal: if he give out the word, the cherubims move, lift up their wings, and order the wheels; if he say, go and minister to yonder saints, presently they go, as it is their duty.'

2. It is their delight to attend the saints: they know that one day they shall live together, and sing together, and rejoice together; they know that the saints shall supply the room of the fallen angels; and when they meet, O the joy that will be betwixt them! In the mean time, it is their desire and delight to attend their partners in heaven's joy, for they are acquainted with God's design and purpose to save them; they know what Christ hath done and suffered for them; the mystery of godliness is seen of angels; it is so seen, that they take great delight to behold it, yea, they are ravished in the very beholding of it, as at some new and strange object; *they look into it,* saith Peter their whole spirits are taken up with it, as if it were the blessedest

sight that ever they could behold; and they that are so ravished at the work of our redemption, how should they but with delight attend the redeemed ones of Jesus Christ.

3. It is their honour to wait on the saints. It is true, in some respects they are of an higher form, they come nearest to God of all the creatures in the world, and they have kept their cloth of gold unstained six thousand years: O the purity, agility, beauty, glory, sanctity, and excellency of the angels! Man in his greatest honour, advanced to the highest pinnacle of happiness, is yet in many things below the angels, *Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels;* and yet it is no indignity for them to attend the saints, for herein they are but fellow-workers with God and Christ, *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.* My Father is beneficent in preserving saints; and I work by the same power, saith Christ. At first I created, and still I preserve. Now if God and Christ thus work and wait, well may the angels co-work with them. It was Paul's honour that he wrought together with God: *We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also.* Servants of God (such as men and angels) cannot but look on it as their glory, to put to their hands in the same work with their sovereign Lord, the King of glory: if Christ himself came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, the angels may well think it an honour to imitate him, and to minister also.

3. There are other reasons in respect of saints: as,—

1. It is for their consolation: a mighty comfort it is, that other creatures should do them service, that heaven and earth, and all herein, should be made for them, and be continued and preserved for their sakes; and yet as if all this were not enough, except the angels also were subservient, that creatures of the highest order, of the finest make, of the noblest spirits, who behold the face of God himself, and are taken up with the immediate enjoyment of his fulness, that they, even they should be destined by Christ, the King of saints, to minister to his saints, Oh what a comfort is this! *If whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope;* surely this that is written of the angels, as concerning their office and ministration, must be full of comfort, indeed reprobates and unbelievers have none of this comfort; alas, they are not within the verge of this blessed text, they have nothing to do with the scripture of heaven's heirs; it is for them, and only for them, who shall be heirs of salvation.

2. It is for their benefit both of body and soul: some observe, that were it not for the angels, the devils, that are ever seeking to devour, would quickly tear the bodies of the saints into atoms. We read, how, afore Christ's death, the bodies of many were possessed of devils, and, when they had torn them, by the command of Christ they were dispossessed; but after the great work of

our redemption, the devils were more restrained in their power: *Now shall the prince of this world be cast out.* Christ so bound him in chains by his holy angels since that time, that now he hath not his liberty as before to hurt the saints: it is true, that he is still in the world, and rules in the air, but the good angels so defend our bodies against the evil angels, that they cannot touch an hair to our hurt, and, as for our souls, they are in their special care; it is not to tell how many are the benefits they administer that way; they teach us truths, they open God's will, they reveal the secrets and mysteries of grace, and by these means they promote the salvation of souls: this they did sometimes by dreams in the night, and sometimes by conference in the day, when they assumed bodies; but now still they admonish our minds, and, in a secret unperceivable way, they persuade as to the reading, hearing, and obeying of God's word. But of these, and the like soul-services of the angels, we shall enlarge another time.

Sect. IV.—*Use of Terror.*

Well then; is the ministering office of the angels not for all, but only for heaven's heirs? What terror is this to the wicked? Alas, they have no angels to keep them, or take care of them, they are devoid of the presence and ministry of the heavenly angels; or if they have any inspection of them, it is but a general inspection, such as Hagar and Ishmael had, who are set out in scripture as the types of those that are rejected of the Lord. And this, I take it, is the reason why reprobates live, and are not all suddenly struck dead, to wit, because the angels have some general charge and care over them, that they may be preserved to their condition, but they are not properly guardians of any such men: O woe, woe, woe to the wicked world, *when one woe is past, behold there come two more woes after.* As it was with Saul, when God was gone from him, then the Philistines made war against him, and he was sore wounded of the archers, and at last he fell on his own sword and died: so where the angels of God stand aloof, and will not rescue, one woe follows after another, there the evil spirits keep their rendezvous, the devil works in them mightily, they are hoodwinked, and besotted and blinded by the god of this world, having no power so much as to groan or to wish for deliverance; we may say of all reprobates as it was said of Saul, *An evil spirit is upon them, and God is not with them:* they are already taken in the snare of the devil, he hath them in a string, and leads them captive at his will: and no wonder, for they have not those aids, those contrary whisperings, they have not the good angels to conflict with the bad, they have not the spirit, a new nature, much less the external helps and guards, of holy and blessed angels; ah, woe to these men!

Sect. V.—*Use of Encouragement.*

What encouragement is this to the godly? Though the wicked have not such guards, yet the godly are the proper objects of the angels' ministry: Are they not ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them? It is a question that puts all out of question: the wicked indeed are left to the wide world, but God is at the charge of giving the saints tutors, and governors, and guardians; here is a mighty encouragement to the people of God; I know not the condition that any saint in the world may be in, wherein we cannot find in scripture some encouragement or other drawn from an angel: Art thou in a journey? so was Abraham's servant when Abraham told him, *He shall send his angel before thee, and prosper thy way:* Art thou in battle, or ready to march against the enemy? so was Israel, when the Lord told Moses, *For mine angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perrizzites,*&c. *and I will cut them off:* Art thou in oppression, under the tyranny of wicked men? so Moses told Edom the Israelites were, *Thou knowest of all the travel that hath befallen us, how our fathers went down into Egypt, and the Egyptians vexed us and our fathers; and when we cried unto the Lord, he heard our voice, and sent an angel, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt.* Art thou in persecution for religion, and forced to fly for thy life? so was Elijah, when he requested for himself that he might die, and said, *It is enough now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers; and as he lay and slept under a juniper-tree, behold an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise, and eat.* Art thou traduced, maligned, censured, imprisoned, and condemned to death for righteousness' sake, or for the truth? so was Daniel, whom God yet delivered by an angel: *My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me, for as much as before him innocency was found in me.* And so it was with Peter, *For behold the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison,—and when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod.* Art thou amidst a people, whom God for sin hath decreed to destruction? so was Lot, whom the angels hastened out of Sodom, lest he should be consumed in the iniquity of the city. But I am saved this labour of searching any further into scripture; a worthy author had framed us the variety of their assistance in this same scheme: 'One while they lead us in our way, as they did Israel; another while they instruct us, as they did Daniel: one while they fight for us, as they did for Joshua; another while they purvey for us, as they did for Elijah: one while they fit us to our holy vocation, as they did Isaiah; another while

they dispose of the opportunities of our calling for good, as they did of Philips, to the eunuch: one while they foretel our danger as to Joseph and Mary; another while they comfort us in our afflictions, as they did Christ and his apostles: one while they resist our offensive courses, as they did Moses; another while they encourage us in our devotions, as they did Paul: one while they deliver us from durance, as they did Peter; another while they preserve us from death, as the three children: one while they restrain our presumption, as the cherub before the gate of paradise; another while they excite our courage, as to Joshua, Gideon, and the other judges: one while they cure our bodies, as at the pool of Bethesda; another while they carry up our souls to heaven, as they did to Lazarus. It were endless to instance in all the gracious offices which the angels perform.'— And is not here great encouragement to all the saints? The children of princes are not without their guard, no more are God's children; as they have an heavenly Father, so they have an heavenly guard to wait upon them, and to minister unto them: O mighty encouragement!

Sect. VI.—*Use of Admiration.*

How may this angel-administration cause the saints to admire at the kindness of the Lord towards them? You darlings of the Almighty, if others regard not, you have cause to wonder at this, that the angels, those created citizens of glory, should receive you in your straights, march after you in your ways, counsel you in your doubts, defend you in your dangers; in a word, that God should charge all his elect angels to shew love and respect unto you, yea, to serve and to minister unto you: stand amazed at this, O ye saints! The angels are the most glorious creatures in the world, they are the glittering courtiers of heaven, and the beautiful companions of Jesus Christ. Job calls them morning stars, in that being newly created, they gave glory to the Creator, even as the birds in spring begin their notes, and sing at break of day; and he calls them sons of God, in that he doth use them as children, they are very near to him, they do always attend him, and continually see his face, they have the privilege of sons: *The morning stars sing together, and the sons of God shout for joy.* Now, that such creatures should wait on sinful wretches, dust and ashes, worms and not men, it is enough to cast any man in the world into an amazement or astonishment. A wonder it is, that any creature, though inferior, should be serviceable to man, that by sin hath lost his dominion over the creatures; a wonder it was, that the ravens should minister unto Elijah; but that all the host of heaven should be abased (if we may speak after the manner of men) to so low a work, that angels should perform offices of respect to the meanest creatures; that

an angel clothed with light and glory should come to Zachary, to Mary, and to the shepherds; what, angels of God to wait upon those who are the most despised and rejected of men? Stand, and wonder at this! *When I consider the heavens* (saith David) *the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the Son of man, that thou visitest him? for thou hast made him a little lower than the angels.* This indeed is applied to Christ, Heb. 2. 6, 7, 9, 11, *who was made a little lower than the angels by the suffering of death, but now is crowned with glory and honour; yet* (saith the apostle) *he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.* Christ and we are of the same nature, which though in some respects it be lower, yet it is but a little lower than the angels; nay, in some respects are we higher than the angels, for the angels wait on the saints, and the angels are not so married to Jesus Christ in a mystical union, as the saints and people of God, restored to his image, are. Admire at this, all ye saints! verily there is somewhat in holiness more than the world seeth or knoweth, there is some worth, or excellency, or consanguinity, in the saints to Christ, or I cannot think that Christ would set such a guard upon them as his own courtiers. The angels are indeed near in alliance to Christ, but the saints are nearer: the angels are God's progeny, the sons of God, and so Christ is their brother; but man is allied nearer to Christ than so, in that man is of God's lineage, and Christ is of man's lineage: and hence it is, that the angels must now stoop, and bow, and wait, and serve, and minister to the saints. Are they not nearer allied than all the angels? Unto which of the angels said he at any time, you are my sons, my kinsmen, brethren, mother, sister, spouse? An angel is constantly called a ministering spirit, but is no where read a friend of God, the Son of the Father, the delight of the Son of man, the temple of the holy Spirit, wherein the thrice glorious Trinity takes up his mansion. Christians, admire, here is enough to cast you into an ecstasy: come, view the saint's pedigree, and tell me what you think of it.

The Saints' Pedigree.

Christ is to us,
- Our Lord, 1 Cor. 1. 2.
- Our Friend, Cant. 5. 16.
- Our Flesh and Blood, Heb. 2. 14.
- Our Brother, Heb. 2. 17.
- Our Father, Isa. 63. 16.
- Our Husband, Rom. 7. 4.

We are to Christ,
- His Servants, Rom. 6. 22.
- His Friends, John 15. 14.
- His Kinsmen, Mark 3. 21
- His Brethren, Job 7 3
- His Sons, Gal. 3. 26.
- His Spouse, Sister, Love, Dove, &c. Cant. 4. 9.

We are both
- One Vine, John 15. 1.
- One Seed, Gal. 3. 16.
- One Temple, Ephes. 2. 15.
- One Body, Rom. 12. 5.
- One Spirit, 1 Cor. 6. 17.
- One Christ, 1 Cor. 12. 12.

Upon the view of this line, genealogy, pedigree, (call it what you please,) methinks, my brethren, we should all cry out, *Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him? for thou hast made him higher than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour; thou hast made him to have dominion over the works of thy hands, thou hast put all things under his feet:—O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the world!*

Sect. VII.—*Use of Magnanimity.*

Do angels wait on heaven's heirs? Come then, ye holy ones, and take an holy state upon you, think yourselves too good to abase yourselves to the world, or to sin, or to be slaves of men: why, you are kings, and have a mighty guard, and therefore you should carry yourselves answerably. Little do the men of this world think of this, or believe this truth; if they see a man to have at his heels a long train of earthly followers, in silks, satins, golden chains, and such like braveries; Oh how such sights are gazed on! and how are such men usually titled, your greatness, highness, excellency! Alas, alas! all is but beggary to the glory of the least of the saints of God, and of their attendants. I see indeed a great deal of glitter in some of these earthly state solemnities, yet in all their pomps they had need of a fair day, and clear sun-shine, or else half their show will be lost: but angels, (the saints' attendants) enlighten the greatest darkness, Luke 2. 9. Acts 12. 7. *Is not their countenance as lightning, and their raiment white as snow?* Matt. 28. 3. Oh then! how should this greaten the spirits of God's people! Why, think of it, you whom it most concerns; it was an high favour for Mordecai, a poor porter, to have Haman, the great pompous peer of the empire, to be his attendant, his lacquey, or his footmen, for an hour: how much more honour is it for you poor worms, to have those mighty peers of heaven, little roys, demigods, to wait upon you continually! King Solomon in all his royalty, in the midst of his

two hundred targets, and three hundred shields of beaten gold, was not like one of the lilies of the field, much less like a saint environed and encompassed with a wall of angels: hence was that saying of Christ, *Despise not one of these little ones;* and why so? because in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father. The brightest angels that look in the face of God, despise not to attend on the meanest saints; and how then should any despise them whom the angels honour? How should any think them unworthy of their company or countenance, whom the great angels think most worthy of their service and attendance? But, especially, how should any presume to wrong the saints, or to rush into God's paradise, such as every true Christian is, where stand the angels of God with a flaming sword which turns every way? It is enough, one would think, to affright all the men in the world from offering any violence to any of God's people; but howsoever they carry, let Christians carry as heaven's heirs, let them walk worthy of God, who hath called them to his kingdom and glory: let them consider what servitors and ministers God hath appointed to wait on them, and in the name of God let them carry themselves answerably, and be holily magnanimous. Plutarch tells of Themistocles, that he accounted it not to stand with his state to stoop down to take up the spoils of the enemy whom he had scattered in flight; but says to one of his followers, you may, for you are not Themistocles. If others mind the earth and earthly things, as the swine that follow the trough, and can look no higher, yet let the saints (which the angels wait on) walk above the world, and above all things that are here below. Citizens of Rome might not accept of any other freedom in any other city; they accounted it a dishonour to the freedom of Rome, to take freedom any where in the world besides: you that are free of the kingdom of heaven, and that have the created citizens of heaven to be your life-guards, Oh do not entangle yourselves with the things of earth, seek not to be free here, as if you had no better portion: surely if you understand your own privileges, you are spiritual kings and queens of an otherwise kingdom than this world; you have the privileges of a council, to wit, God's testimonies, Psa. 119. 24. and the privileges of a guard full of state and strength, to wit, God's angels; O how should this greaten your spirits: *Let the saints be joyful in glory, let them sing aloud upon their beds, let the high praises of God be in their mouths, and a two-edged sword in their hands, to execute vengeance upon the heathen. This honour have all his saints.*

Sect. VIII.—*Use of Exhortation.*

Is the ministering office of the angels for heaven's heirs? then to your duties of communion with them. Oh improve this ordinance! Why, here is an ordinance of Jesus Christ scarce thought on; the angels minister to saints, and the saints almost, if not altogether, forget their duties which they owe to God and Christ in that respect. What, my brethren, are you ignorant of such an ordinance? or do you know it, and yet are you negligent? If you are simple, ignorant, and that your ignorance is of pure negation, and not of evil disposition, it is then high time to discover this mystery of godliness to you, that you may be in the exercise of such duties yet unknown; or if you know them, and are negligent of them, it is then high time to rouse up your spirits, and to 'stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, —that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandments of the apostles, of our Lord and Saviour.' Howsoever the case stands with you, I beseech you to hear, learn, practise, and make use of, this present book and work; it is another message that I have from God, another ordinance that I would discover; therefore 'set your hearts to all the words that I testify to you this day, for it is not a vain thing, but it is for your lives.'

The motives I use, shall be only these,—

1. Angel-administration, and our communion with them, is an ordinance of Jesus Christ; it is an institution of Christ, which hath connected to it some kind of spiritual efficacy to work on souls. Amongst other intervening mediums (saith one) there is one great ordinance, which we have not so much considered of, viz. That the good angels (the chariots and horses) should relieve us, as they did Elisha; nor is their relief only as to outwards, but in relation to our religious walking, and to our inward man. Were it not sad to lose an ordinance of Jesus Christ? Or if it be not lost in respect of the living instruments on their parts, yet is it not sad that we should make no use of them? Ministers are an ordinance of Christ, they are messengers, interpreters, (even as the angels, and therefore are called angels, Rev. i. 20.) their office is to declare unto man his righteousness; to pray men in Christ's stead to be reconciled unto God; to gather together the saints; to be Christ's paranymphs; to deal about the getting of a wife for the Lamb; to cater for heaven; to bring in custom for the kingdom of God. Ministers and angels are in the very same employment. Now were it not sad, that the ministers of Christ should be neglected or despised? What if you have ministers; is there no use to be made of such an ordinance? The apostle tells you, you cannot have saving knowledge, regeneration, or faith, without their use: I do not speak what God may do

extraordinarily, but this is God's ordinary way: *How can they believe on him of whom they have not heard? and how can they hear without a preacher?* I may say the same of angels in their way, for they are rational and living instruments, they are ministers of God, and they administer to us saving truths: an angel told that first news of the gospel, *Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.* And shall this ordinance of Christ be without any consideration how we may receive good from it? God forbid.

2. The angels are an ordinance ever present; some other ordinances may be taken from us: men may take from us our bibles, teachers, pastors, or they may imprison us where we cannot enjoy them, but they cannot take from us the holy angels: *When the high priest, and all that were with him, laid hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison, then the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life. And when Peter was in prison, sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and the keepers before the door kept the prison, behold the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison; and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly.* No prison is so close, no keepers are so vigilant, as to keep out angels: though we want, and may want other ordinances, yet we have the angels as an ordinance, to walk up and down with us, wheresoever we are, or whithersoever we go. I cannot but remember that speech of a great divine, which at the first reading exceedingly struck me: 'The good Lord forgive me, for that, amongst my other offences, I have suffered myself so much to forget, as his Divine presence, so the presence of his holy angels: it is, I confess, my great sin that I have filled my eyes with other objects, and have been slack in returning praises to my God for the continual assistance of those blessed and beneficent spirits, which have ever graciously attended me, without intermission, from the first hour of my conception to this present moment, neither shall ever, I hope, absent themselves from my tutelage and protection till they shall have presented my poor soul to her final glory.' If a good man, of an holy gracious spirit, was so forgetful of them, that he was fain to cry *Peccavi*, (I confess my great sin, and, the good Lord forgive me,) methinks it should be a prevailing motive to work on us, so to converse with them, and to perform our respective duties to them, as being ever present, without intermission they may wait on us: yet how is it that days without number we should forget them, and their ministration?

3. The angels are an ordinance, improving other ordinances of Jesus Christ; in this respect there is no fear of clashing with other ordinances: it is true that the Lord never calls any assembly to two divers employments at one and the same time,

unless they be subservient the one to the other. Hence it is we blame them, who, coming into our congregations when some public ordinances are in hand, they betake themselves to their private devotions, and will not reverently (without more ado) compose themselves to join with the assembly in that ordinance of God which is in hand: we would not have ordinances clash, only angel-ministration in religious affairs will not hinder, but further our religious services; and angel-administration in civil affairs will not hinder, but further our civil business. 1. In religious services, the angels are assistants; it is said, that they suggest suitable, seasonable, and pious thoughts at such a time: when Cornelius was praying, he saw an angel, saying unto him, thy prayers and thy alms are come up for a memorial before God: and while Zacharias was executing the priest's office before God, there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord on the right side of the altar of incense, saying, thy prayer is heard. 2. In civil affairs the angels are assistant;—they shall keep thee in all thy ways; in thy vocation, or particular calling. Now, herein is the excellency of such an ordinance, that it is an addition and improvement to all other ordinances; an argument sufficient to bind us to our duties in reference to it.

4. Angel-ministrations, and our communion with them, is an ordinance in opposition to Satan's temptations, and our communion with him: it were enough to amaze poor souls to consider the powers and principalities that are against them; were they but weak, they were less considerable; but we wrestle not against flesh and blood, (said the apostle,) but against spirits, yea, against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places. And yet as great as the power and policy of devils are, they are less in power than the holy angels: *There was war in heaven, Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not.—And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand, and he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.* Now, here is the encouragement to our duties; not only for God and Christ, who is the author and finisher of our faith, but even spiritual substances of good angels, proportionable to the other of bad angels, contend with them, and stand most valiantly on our side.

But what are those duties of communion we owe the angels in this respect? I answer, 1. In general. 2. In special.

1. In general: as is their ministration, so is our duty of communion with them. Now in several ways do they administer to us, and so in several respects do we owe duties to God and them. There is a proportion (if we can find it out) betwixt their ministration and our duty, and they answer one another, as, in the glass, face answers face: if they serve us, certainly there is

something of service that we owe God and them: as the Lord could say, *If I be a Father, where is mine honour? And if I be a master, where is my fear?* So if the angels stand in any such relation towards us, it cannot be but proportionable or suitable duties are to be performed by us.

2. In special: as the kinds of their ministration differ at several times, so are we to observe their ministration at these times, and to return suitable duties. At the first they minister in one kind, and anon they minister in another kind: as our several needs are at several times, so are their several ministrations at those times. *Ex. gr.* When I was in my mother's womb, they ministered thus; and when I was born, and yet an infant, they ministered thus; and when I was grown, and come to riper years, they ministered thus; and when I die, and go out of the world, they will minister thus; and when I shall rise again, and come to judgment, they will minister thus. Now here is my duty: 1. To consider their several ministrations at those several times. 2. To return suitable duties at times seasonable, as I am, in their season, to perform all other duties.

Sect. IX.—*Use of Direction.*

And this is that special use which I aimed at, and which I had at first in my eye when I begun this work; it is an use of direction, wherein I shall first lay down the office of angels, and then our office. First, what they do in their times, and then what we must do in our times, in answer to them and their ministrations. And O that the Lord would bless this work to thee that readest! O that he, on whose errand I come, would speak himself to thy soul, for he is able to instruct; yea, when he teacheth, all are scholars.

MINISTRATION OF,

AND

COMMUNION WITH ANGELS.

CHAP. I.

SECT. I.—*Of the Time when the Angels first begin their Ministration.*

THE first period wherein the angels minister to heaven's heirs, is, from their quickening in the womb, till their birth. Come then, and first see the ministration of angels at this time; and, secondly, learn and practise we those several duties that especially concern the saints in that respect.

1. For the ministration of angels in that period, most probable it is that then they begin their ministration. The exact beginning is indeed questionable; some would have it begin at the first hour of conception: They have ever graciously attended me (saith one) without intermission, from the first hour of my conception to this present moment. Others, at the first infusion of the soul: Their care begins (say they) as soon as the child is quickened in the womb, for that they have then another distinct charge to look after. Others at the birth of the elect; God revealing to the angels who are such, by requiring their attendance on them then: From their birth to the end of their life, saith Zanchius, angels are assigned of God to wait on the elect. Others at the baptism of infants: Origen, recounting many opinions, doth mention this; which is very improbable, for then it is in the power of parents, who set the time of baptism, to say when the angels shall begin their office over their children: but the elect are as precious and dear to God before, as after the ordinance of baptism. Others at the time of conversion. Of which two reasons are given:—

1. Because the angels know not the decrees before that election be declared in conversion: but this we deny.

2. Because in the state of nature a man is under the wrath of God, and is vexed with evil spirits, that hurry him to sin, and rule in the children of disobedience: but although this cannot be denied, yet God is resolved that all his elect shall have invisible supports against Satan, to preserve them charily, as chosen

vessels, against the time that he shall manifest himself unto them; and it is sufficient to angels, that God wills their attendance, and that hereafter they shall discern some fruit of their attendance. For my part, amidst all these differences, I close only with them who say, that the angels begin the execution of their charge when the soul is infused: and the reasons are solid—

1. Because the child hath then a distinct being of his own.
2. Because then it is a person consisting of soul and body.
2. Because God's providence over soul and body (of which the angels are servants) taketh date thence; *Thou hast covered me*, saith David, *in my mother's womb:* The Lord, in framing our bodies and creating our souls in our mother's womb, did then cover his tender work with his mighty power from all inconveniences, as with a shield; and therefore then did the angels begin their ministration.

Sect. II.—*Of the Manner of Angel-ministration at that Time.*

But how do the angels minister at such a time? I answer, they keep, preserve, defend, deliver, sustain, and strengthen the babes, even in the womb. I cannot think that they have only one office at such a time, but that sometimes they attend them for good, and sometimes they deliver them from evil. The case stands thus; in the creation or infusion of the soul, (which is all one, for *creando infunditur et infundendo creatur)* the angels receive their commission; as if the Lord should say, come, blessed angels, here is a creature that shall at last fill up the room of some fallen angel, and then it shall be like to yourselves, and you shall love it as yourselves, but, in the mean time, it is my pleasure that you should minister unto it, and keep it safe; which is no sooner said, but they are prompt and ready to do God's will.

We may wonder at this, that the angels should thus minister to man after his fall, which they never did before. In that collation betwixt innocent Adam, second Adam, renewed Adam, and old Adam, it is said, that the angels did neither minister unto, nor keep the first Adam, before the fall, because he was in no danger, only they loved him: the angels indeed ministered to Christ, the second Adam, and loved him, but did not keep him, for he was comprehensor as well as viator; Christ is the head of angels, and therefore he is not kept by them: the angels now minister to the renewed Adam, yea, they love him, and keep him, and yet this argues not any prerogative that the saints have above Christ, but rather their weakness and wants, that they have need of the angels to preserve them, as young children stand in need of nurses to wait upon them: but as for old Adam, or wicked reprobates, the angels neither minister to them, nor love

them, nor keep them, in respect of any special and particular keeping: it may be the angels are sometimes ministers of outward things even to the wicked, as the angels brought down manna in the wilderness to the bad Israelites, as well as good; but they have not that particular care of the wicked, as they have of the elect of God; they come not up and down the ladder, Christ, to minister to them, as they do to the elect. Now this keeping of the elect, is not only in this life, but all the while that they are in their mother's womb.

Sect. III.—*Experiences of this Truth.*

Of this, as of all the rest, I would give in some experiences for further clearing:—

1. An ancient matron having many children, and having left bearing for about the space of twelve years, the Lord then unexpectedly gave her to conceive: she wondered, and apprehending nothing but ill health, purposed on such a day to take physic; but the night before (if I mistake not) she felt the child stir in her womb, and then she brake out, as Sarah did; "What! after I am waxed old, shall I bear a child, my lord being old also?" Hereupon the physic was removed, the child preserved, and rightly called Isaac, in imitation of old Abraham and Sarah, who laughed at the news of the angel, that they should have a son in their old age, Gen. 17. 17. and 18. 12.

2. Three godly women, in the island of Guernsey, were condemned to be burnt for their religion; and though one of them was great with child, yet found she no favour: as they were all three in the fire, the belly of the woman breaking with the vehemency of the flame, the infant being a fair man-child, fell into the fire; which being caught, and carried to the bailiff, he commanded it to be had back, and thrown into the fire; whereby after it was born, and preserved by the angels, it died a martyr. *Clarke.*

Sect. IV.—*Of the Duties that concern us in this respect.*

2. The duties that concern us in this respect, are either parents' duties, or children's:—

1st. For the parents.

1. Parents may rejoice at this, that the holy angels attend them, and those little pieces and pictures of themselves. You that are mothers great with child, are you not sometimes in trouble, fear, and peril? Be not discouraged, for the angels attend your motions, and all occurrences, for the safety and preservation both of you and your's. It is observed, that when Mary saluted Elizabeth, the babe sprang in her womb for joy, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost. Some think

that this springing of the babe was by the presence of an angel with John, otherwise that little embryo had been incapable of such affections and motions, according to the course of nature; and immediately it follows, "Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost." A serious consideration of the angels ministering to such embryos, may be a blessed means to fill you with the comforts of God's Spirit. O rejoice in this! Nor is that all: for—

2. Parents ought to pray, not to the angels, but to the God of angels, for the favour, assistance, and protection of the angels to their infants. I know such prayers are not usual; but is not that a neglect of duty to our babes? When David prayed against his enemies, he could say, "Let the angel of the Lord chase them; and let the angel of the Lord persecute them:" How much more may we say for our tender infants in the womb, Let the angel of the Lord guard them, and let the angel of the Lord keep them. Manoah and his wife were very careful what to do for the babe which must be born to deliver Israel out of the Philistines' hands; and therefore after the angel had appeared to the woman, and told her, then Manoah entreated the Lord, and said, "O my Lord, let the man of God (or the angel of God) which thou didst send, come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born: and God hearkened to the voice of Manoah, and the angel of God came again." Indeed when he came, he would have no burnt-offering offered unto him, but gave direction, "If thou wilt offer a burnt-offering, thou must offer it unto the Lord." Angels would not be prayed unto, nor worshipped, Rev. 19. 10. & 22. 9. But yet, in reference to the angels, we find Manoah praying and offering unto the Lord; and if he prayed for angel-direction, how much more may we turn the promises into prayers for angel-protection and ministration to these poor infants yet unborn!

2d. For the children or parties themselves, when grown.

1. Let them know and be acquainted with their angel-keepers. When David considered how he was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth, and covered in his mother's womb, he cried out, "Marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well." It is not enough to have angel-keepers before we are born, but in time we should endeavour to know them: it is sad to be ignorant still of such a glorious truth; surely God would have us acquainted with his works, and to bear witness of what we know for his glory.

2. Let them praise God for the angels ministering to them in the womb. "Thou art he (saith David) that took me out of the womb:" and thou art he that preserves me in the womb. The Lord doth many things for us, which, at the time when he doth them, we cannot observe; it is our duty therefore to look upon

them afterwards, that they may furnish us with matter of praise to God. But why is not praise rendered to the angels, as well as to God? Because God will not give his glory to another: angels must have their due, but they must not rob God of his praise; whatsoever instruments and means the Lord makes use of, the spiritual eye pierceth through them, and looks on God, and gives him all the glory. You that hear of this angel-ministration in the womb, O praise the Lord! It is, if you rightly apprehend it, a smothered wonder, and so glorious a work of God, that he deserves perpetual praise from you for that one work. "Thou art he that preserved me in, and took me out of, my mother's bowels; my praise shall be continually of thee."

3. Let them act their faith and trust in God, even because of this: to this end are all the experiences of God's love to his saints, that they might store up their faith, and trust God more. O then, among other experiences of God's dealings, make use of this, for strengthening of your faith! "Thou art my hope, O Lord God; thou art my trust from my youth; by thee have I been holden up from the womb." As Satan makes assault after assault against faith, so should we raise bulwark after bulwark, for defence thereof: after we have looked upon other men's experiences, we should recount our own experiences of God's care towards us, and make use of all God's dealings for our strengthening. 'Thus, Lord, thou didst for me in my youth, and childhood, and infancy. Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breast; I was cast upon thee from the womb; thou art my God from my mother's belly; yea, in the womb, before I was born, thou didst cover me, and guard me by the angels: and, therefore, how should I but believe? How am I forced to acknowledge that the Lord never leaves me, even when I least perceive his presence?' Here is mighty encouragement for faith.

4. Let them love God and his angels, for this early ministration of the angels. Ancient love is a loadstone of love; were it but a little love, yet long love might beget love again. Why, God hath loved us from everlasting, and the angels have loved us from our first beginning, and therefore how should we but love them again? David's consideration of God's mercy towards us in the womb, took up his heart and ravished his spirit; yea, he was so exceedingly taken with it, that he could not off it. "Thine eye did see my substance yet being unperfect, and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.—How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God; how great is the sum of them! if I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee." Oh that our souls were awaked, and oh that our spiritual senses were renewed, that upon a serious consideration of God's love, and of the angels' love to

us in the womb, we might love again, and in a holy pang cry out, How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God! and how precious are your thoughts unto me, O ye angels of God?

CHAP. II.

Sect. I.—*Of the Ministration of Angels in our Infancy and Childhood.*

The second period wherein the angels minister to heaven's heirs, is, from their birth to their youth, or riper years; this takes up the time of infancy and childhood. And in prosecution of this, first set we the object before us at this time; and, secondly, learn and practice we those several duties that will naturally flow from such an object.

I. For the object, viz. The ministration of angels in our infancy and childhood. The scriptures are express: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." By *little ones*, I do not exclude the adult, who resemble little children in some imitable qualities; nor would I exclude little children, whom our Saviour propounds as a pattern for the imitation of the adult, Matt. xviii. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. But I would rather take all in, and say, that by little ones is meant either those who are little in stature, as the child set in the midst of them; or, little in grace, parts, esteem, as some of the disciples were; or little in their own eyes, as all the elect are or must be: all these have their angels, and therefore none of these must be despised. When Christ was but a babe, "the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word." And when Herod was dead, "the angel appeared again unto Joseph, in Egypt, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel." Thus was Christ provided for in his cradle by an angel. When Hagar had not wherewithal to feed her child, "she cast the child under a shrub; and she went and sat her down over against him a good way off, saying, Let me not see the death of the child: and she sat over against him, and lift up her voice, and wept. And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of the Lord called Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not, for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is; arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand, for I will make him a great nation: and God opened

her eyes, and she saw a well of water, and she went and filled her bottle with water, and gave the lad drink." Here was an angel calling, comforting, and directing Hagar in her child's behalf: or if Hagar and Ishmael were not elect, when Jacob blessed the two sons of Joseph, he said, "The angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless(or keep) the lads." Many think this was the great Angel of the covenant, to whom Jacob prayed for a blessing on Joseph's sons; and the rather because he is said to redeem him from all evil, which is properly peculiar to Jesus Christ: but others say, that this form of prayer was only an interpretative kind of imploration, that God would bless or keep Joseph's sons by his angels: and for that of redeeming, if this was spoken of eternal redemption, it were indeed peculiar to Christ; but Jacob (saith a late writer) speaks here of redemption and deliverance from temporal evils, which is confessed to be a main office of angels. And Chrysostom, Basil, Rivius, Mercerius (as he cites them) quote this very place for the deputation of angels.

SECT. II.—*Of the Manner of Angel Ministration at that Time.*

BUT how do the angels minister to us in our childhood? I answer:—

1. They keep us from evil. Were it not so, into how many dangers should we fall? Indeed, a wonder it is, that most children are not disfigured and lamed with bruises and fearful miscarriages, with cutting and burning themselves, as hundreds and thousands of opportunities are offered, but that angels are very diligent to keep them out of harm's way: "When father and mother forsake me (saith David) then will the Lord take me up:" when parents are without natural affection, when nurses are careless, and children are of restless, stirring, and climbing dispositions, then doth the guardianship of angels especially appear. To this purpose is Chemnitius cited by the aforesaid author, saying, That infants are obnoxious to such and so many dangers, that no anxiety of parents, or diligence of servants, can secure them, without the tuition of angels. And Gerson observes the like: 'Whence is it (saith he) that little children are conserved from so many perils of their infancy, as fire, water, falls, suffocation, but by the agency of angels?'

2. They keep us in health: some say, that much physic should not be administered to infants, it is not safe to be too much tampering with such tender things; and I suppose there is less need, in that angels themselves are instead of physicians to such weak patients. It is Mr. Dyke's saying, Angels help to remove diseases and evils, as the devils help to bring them on us: and to that purpose they may have an hand in the use of such means as are for our bodily health.—Angels are the rockers (saith the same author) of babes and sucklings; their invisible hands are

doing for them, when we little think of any such matter. It may be some are sick, and yet recover, and we attribute it to this or that means, when indeed the instrument was an heavenly angel. 'Certainly (said our divine Seneca) there are many thousand events, wherein common eyes see nothing but nature, which yet are effected by the ministration of angels: as when sudden cures were wrought at the pool of Bethesda, it might perhaps be attributed by many to some beneficial constellation; but we know, out of the evangelist, that an angel descended and moved the water, and made it sanative: where we find a probability of second causes in nature, we are apt to confine our thoughts from looking higher, yet even then there are many times unseen hands:' How much more when the work is above the power of any secondary cause! this carries its own evidence, without dispute, that if it be not of nature, it must needs be of an higher efficiency. *Ex. gr.* Have we seen a poor weak child raised up from deadly sickness, when all natural helps have given him up; then have the angels of God been his secret physicians.

2. They teach and tutor us. Some think, that angels do help little infants to speak and go; but, howsoever, they are as tutors and schoolmasters to them. Zanchy compares them first to nurses, and then to schoolmasters, that they may instruct them, admonish them, correct them, comfort them, defend them from all evil, and provoke them to all good. Amidst all their offices (which are almost infinite) this I believe is the angels' care of little children, that they be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Heaven is the place whence many good angels are fallen; and the good angels would have these places filled up again with saints. Hence they take care especially of their soul, tacitly revealing to them the mysteries of grace: not so as if the angels' office were to preach the word; that ministry is not committed to them, but to the apostles, and others called to it; but it is at least the angels' care that both children and adults should be taught in the church by men appointed and prepared by the angels: thus the angel spake to Philip, when he was to preach the gospel to the eunuch, saying, "Arise, and go towards the south;" and another angel speaks to Cornelius, saying, "Send to Joppa, and call for one Simon Peter, who shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do." If the angels are not our ordinary preachers, lest they dazzle us, their brightness being unsuitable to our weak conditions; yet are they God's instruments to provide preachers for us, that by them we may be instructed in the law of God, and mysteries of the gospel. And something more the angels do, in that they suggest to infants pious thoughts, and tacitly provoke them to a pious life, and draw out of them such gracious holy words, that the Psalmist's saying is verified, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength. Thus when the children cried in the temple,

"Hosanna to the Son of David," and therefore the priests and scribes were sore displeased; Jesus made their apology, saying, "Have ye never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou perfected praise?" Certainly those Hosannas of the children were above nature, or acquired parts, or parents' education; and therefore they were taught them by the angels.

Sect. III.—*Experiences of this Truth.*

Experiences:—

1. For keeping us from evil.

An infant being laid in his bed with some servants, he was near morning found out of the bed among wooden and iron tools, enough to have killed him; he was taken up cold, yet without any harm, and, being laid in the warm bed, he revived, and so was graciously preserved.

A child fell into a river of water, and, being carried down the stream, was at last taken up for dead, but after some time he revived; and the next day I saw him, and telling him that God had given him a new life, the child wept: I desired him to remember it, improve it, and to thank God for that mercy all his days.

A child playing by the side of a pond, fell into it, where it was like to perish; near the pond was an house, where only one man was reading in a book, but it pleased God that he was suddenly so troubled, though he knew not for what, that he could read no longer: whereupon he walked up and down the room, but could not be quiet; then he walked forth, and espied a straw hat swimming upon the water, and, looking earnestly, he saw the child rise to the top of the water; and so catching hold of it, drew it out, and saved its life.—*White.*

There was a maid, who lived with her mother in Bargamus, and was in one and the same night by a strange wonder brought into the city of Venice; they in the family where she arrived, were near allied to her, and, coming in the morning into the chamber where she was, and finding her unexpectedly stark naked, without any linen, not so much as a rag to cover her, gently demanded of her how she came thither? where her clothes were? and what was the cause of her coming? The poor girl being much ashamed, and mixing her blushes with many tears, made answer to this purpose: 'This very night, (said she,) when I lay betwixt asleep and awake in bed, I perceived my mother steal softly from my side, thinking I had not seen her; and stripping herself from all her linen, she took from her closet a box of ointment, which opening, she anointed herself therewith under the arm-pits, and some other parts of the body; which done, she took a staff, which stood ready in a corner, which she had no sooner bestrid, but in the instant she

rid (or rather flew) out of the window, and I saw her no more: at which being much amazed, and the candle still burning by me, I thought in myself to try a childish conclusion, and rising from my bed, took down the same box, and anointing myself, as I had before observed her, and making use of a bed-staff in the like manner, I was suddenly brought hither in a moment, where I was no sooner entered, but I espied my mother in the chamber with a knife in her hand, with purpose, as I thought, to kill this my young nephew, (pointing to a child in the cradle,) but she was hindered by finding me here; who no sooner saw me, but she began grievously to threat me, and came near to strike me, in which fear I began to call upon God to help me; whose name I had no sooner uttered, but she instantly vanished, and I am left here, even as you found me.' Whereupon his kinsman, the master of the house, writ down her story; and, keeping the maid still with him, sent to the inquisitor of the place, where the mother of the girl, his kinswoman, lived in good reputation, and no way suspected: before whom she was called and questioned, and (as the manner of that country is, upon the like probability and suspicion,) put to the mercy of the tormentor, and at length she confessed every particular before mentioned: to which she added, that she had no less than fifty sundry times been transported by the devil, only with a malicious intent to kill that young child; but she found him always at her arrival so guarded [by angels and] by the blessings and prayers of his devout and religious parents, that she had no power over him.—*Barthol. Spinæus.*

2. For preserving of health and life.

A child being begotten and born of ancient, sickly, and diseased parents, was hereditarily infirm, and so oppressed with children's maladies, that the physician concluded he could not be long-lived; whence the father, drawing nigh to his death, and making his will, gave him such a portion, in case he should live to the age of fourteen years. Weak he was, and many sicknesses he had, and yet still the Lord raised him up, and unexpectedly restored him to health and strength, that he passed over those fourteen years, and yet lives. Oh that it may be to God's glory, and the church's edifying!

At the taking of Bolton by prince Rupert, amongst others then slain, there was one William Isherwood and his wife; and Felice her daughter, being then but eleven weeks old, lay pitifully crying at the breast of her dead mother: but it so pleased God, that an old woman, the wife of one Ralph Helne, of the same town, aged above seventy years, who had not given suck above twenty years before, seeing and hearing the child, compassioned it, and took it up; and having neither food for herself nor for the infant, in that common calamity, to still the child, she laid it to her breast; and behold the goodness of God, who provides for the young ravens that cry! the child sucking, milk came

into her breast, wherewith she nourished it, to the admiration and astonishment of all beholders.

Isenbard, an earl in Swevia, had to wife one Jermentrudis, who grievously accused one of her neighbours for adultery, because she had been delivered of six children at a birth ; but it so fell out afterward, that herself (her husband being abroad in the fields) was delivered of twelve children, all males : she fearing the like infamous punishment, that by her instigation had been inflicted on the former woman, commanded her nurse to kill eleven of them : the nurse going to execute the will of her lady, was met by her lord, then returning homewards ; he demanded what she carried on her lap ? she answered, puppies : He would needs see them, and opening her apron, found the infants : whereupon he examined the matter, found out the truth, enjoined the nurse to be secret, and to put the children to some nurse abroad ; and when they were six years old, he made a feast, apparelled the young boys alike, and presented them to their mother : she misdoubting the truth, confessed her fault, obtained pardon, and owned her children.—*Heylin.*

A minister, in the late rebellion of Ireland, flying for his life to Dublin, his wife and children followed after him : in their journey, being very weary, they all agreed, when night came, to sit down together under the lee of an Irish mountain, for it was frost and snow. The minister's wife had a young child, called John Teate, hanging upon her breasts, which were become dry through her manifold griefs, and want of sleep three nights together ; the child cried and groaned, and, for want of nourishment, was ready to die, in such sort, that the sad mother, not being able any longer to endure the groans and cries of her babe, arose up from the company, (who sat all together as close as they could, with children in their laps, to keep one another warm,) purposing to leave the child by himself, that she might be freed from those heart-piercing sobs and wailings. And here, behold, the Lord, who hath promised to be seen of his servants in time of need, appeared even literally in this mount ; for as she stooped down with a bleeding heart, and eyes full of tears, there to leave her little one upon the ground, she spied, or rather felt upon the rock (it being then something dark, only the snow cast some little light) a sucking-bottle, which she opening, tasted of what was within it, and found it to be full of good milk, which the Irish call bonny-clabber ; she put it into her child's mouth, with fear lest he, never having sucked before out of any bottle besides her breast, would not draw it ; but he readily sucked his bellyful, and fell asleep : the mother hereat astonished, returned to the company, and shewed them what she had found : who much admired at it, how or whence the bottle came thither, considering that the place was far remote from any habitation at all, and the vessel lay upon the top of the snow lately fallen ; but

some of them called to mind Hagar's story, and related it to the rest, how that "when she was wandering in the wilderness of Beersheba, the water was spent in the bottle; and she cast her child under one of the shrubs, and went and sat her down a good way off, for she said, let me not see the death of the child: and she lift up her voice and wept: and then God heard the voice of the lad: and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water, whereat she filled the bottle, and gave the lad drink." These things, compared and laid together, afforded them matter of thankfulness to God, for his providence, and of more comfort than any feast could have done: from thence they concluded, (as if the angel had spoke to them as well as Hagar,) that they should not fear, and that God, who had so wonderfully preserved the infant, would in like manner preserve them all: which accordingly came to pass; for the next day they came to Virginia, where they all found free, unexpected, and plentiful refreshing, even a table in the wilderness; and within two or three days after, they came safe to Dublin, their desired harbour.—*Dr. Teate.*

3. For teaching or tutoring of infants.

A child being very young, much affected his ancient and reverend father with his reading of the bible, and with his questions and answers: which drew from the father these very words, that if the child but lived, he verily believed he would suck in learning as a child doth milk. This reminds me of what was said of Origen, (in whom was certainly much of the angel's tutoring,) that his father brought him up from his childhood most studiously in all good literature, but especially in the reading and exercise of the holy scripture, wherein he had such inward and mystical speculation, that many times he would move questions to his father of the meaning of this place or that place in scripture; insomuch, that his father divers times would uncover his breast, being asleep, and kiss it, giving thanks to God, who had made him so happy a father of such an happy child. This Origen, being but yet a child, would needs have suffered martyrdom with his father Leonides, had not his mother privily in the night-season conveyed away his clothes and his shirt; whereupon more for shame to be seen, than for fear to die, he was constrained to remain at home; yet then he wrote a letter to his father with these very words; *Cave tibi, ne quid propter nos aliud quam Martyrii constanter faciendi propositum cogites,* Eusebius, l. 6. c. 3.

In the primitive persecutions, we read of one Romanus, who first being scourged with whips, with knobs of lead at the end, instead of tears, sighs, and groans, he sung psalms all the time of his whipping; and after, his face being buffeted, his eyelids torn with nails, his cheeks cut with knives, and his teeth struck out, that his pronunciation at least might be impaired, whilst he

preached Christ; he only said, I thank thee, O persecutor, that thou hast opened to me many mouths, whereby I may preach my Lord and Saviour: look how many wounds I have, so many mouths I have to praise my God. But being reviled, that Christ, his God, was but of yesterday, and that the gods of the Gentiles were of great antiquity; he made a long oration of the eternity of Christ: which done, he said, Give me a child but of seven years old, which age is free from malice and other vices, wherewith riper age is commonly infected, and you shall hear what he will say. His request was granted, a pretty boy was called out of the multitude, and set before him: Tell me, my babe (quoth the martyr) whether thou think it reason that we worship one Christ, and in Christ one Father, or else that we worship infinite gods? Unto whom the babe answered, That certainly whatsoever it be that men affirm to be God, must needs be one; which with one, is one and the same; and insomuch as this one is Christ, of necessity Christ must be the true God, for that there be many Gods, we children cannot believe. And after this was the babe martyred.—*Fox's Martyrology.*

Sect. IV.—*Of the Duties that concern us in this respect.*

2. For the several duties that concern us in this respect, they are such as these:—

1. Let us know our privileges, which God in Christ gave us from our birth: The angels were appointed our guardians in the womb, and they have guarded, preserved, and tutored us in our infancy and childhood; many a time were we in great danger of fire, and water, and falls, and suffocations; many a time have we been in the extremity of sickness, and very near to death; many a lesson have we had taught us, and many a motion and holy thought hath been suggested to us:—and is not all this worthy our notice, knowledge, and understanding? Did we but see little children of poor men waited on by a guard of rich, noble, strong, and valiant men; would not all admire? But if he knew this to be our own condition, that when we were babes and sucklings, and could not discern between our right hand and left, that we had then a guard full of state and strength, even of angels themselves; would not this fill us with the sense of the goodness of God? Certainly it concerns us to know thus much, that we may better know the goodness of our God, in thus providing for us: "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him," saith David; and then, "O come, and taste and see that the Lord is good." God would not have his favours unregarded; for if we know them not, never shall we attain to conceive of God himself, especially in his goodness, love, and mercy towards us. But of these more particularly in another section.

2. Pause a while, and to every particular ministration in our infancy, set we a Selah: this was the manner of David in his psalms: when some especial thing worthy attention or observation was delivered, he added, Selah; that, by a little stop or pause of the breath, the matter, worth, or excellency of the thing might be considered. Methinks it is sad that the angels should do such excellent offices for us, as mothers, nurses, physicians, tutors, and that either we should forget them, or not seriously consider and pause upon them; in other things of lesser consequence, we can speak with delight,—*olim meminisse juvabit:* but are not these passages of God's providence, whereof the angels are especial instruments (as, to keep us from evil, to preserve us in health, to teach us God's will in our infancy or childhood,) of far more excellency, profit, and delight? O then let us set a star at the margin of such notes; and whilst we either read or sing them, let us stop awhile, that we may dwell upon them, and see the want of them on all sides; let us say with Jacob, when he saw the ladder on which angels ascended and descended, "Surely the Lord (or the angel of the Lord) was in this place, (or in this passage,) and I knew it not."

3. Bless we God for his free love to us in our first and ignorant times: whilst we were infants, we could neither deserve nor desire such a glorious guard, and yet even then had the angels a charge to keep us from evil, to keep us in health, and to be our tutors: O adore we this free grace! Say we, as the sweet singer of Israel "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hath set thy glory above the heavens: out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou founded praise." Very children themselves could sing Hosanna to Christ by the help of angels, which occasioned him to cite this text, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings has thou perfected praise." Most rightly it is said, "out of the mouths," because they speak not from their own understanding; but by his virtue, and ministration of the angels, their tender tongues were led to speak those words: how much more should we that are adult, and of capacity to understand our duty; I say, how much more should we praise him, by the help of angels, for the help and ministration of his angels! Come, and sing we an Hosanna to him, set we the crown upon the head of free love, free grace: let us join with angels to bless God for his angels, and for their ministration in our infancy and tender years. Is there not cause, in regard of the freeness of his love? It was bestowed on man unmerited, undesired, and placed on him in infancy, yea, even in the dark womb.

4. Live we up to the mercies we received when we discerned little or nothing of them. If any friend do me a kindness unknown to me, I shall take it kindly, and exceeding kindly, when I know it; and if, before, I was unable to requite it, yet

when I am able, I should think myself strongly engaged to retaliate: surely thus it is with the people of God; our friends, the heavenly angels, waited on us in our infancy and childhood, but we neither saw them, nor had them in our thoughts, notwithstanding they went on in the discharge of their office, and sometimes they were as nurses, otherwhiles as physicians, and otherwhiles as tutors and schoolmasters to us: and now that we know this, now that the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, and of his angels, shines in our hearts, oh how should we live up to these mercies! how should we gratify the angels, who have been thus to us, and have done all this for us! The angel that appeared to Gideon under an oak, was for the present unknown; but when he had "caused fire to rise up out of the rock, and to consume the flesh, and the unclean cakes, then Gideon perceived that he was an angel, and said, Alas, O Lord God, for because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face!" Upon this, God was pleased to encourage him, saying, Peace be unto thee, fear not, thou shalt not die. And then Gideon built an altar there unto the Lord, and threw down the altar of Baal, and cut down the grove by it; and afterwards became a judge of Israel till he died. Angels' presence and encouragements, once discovered and made known, are enough, through the blessing of God, to work in us a fear of God, and obedience to his laws.

CHAP. III.

Sect. I.—*Of the Ministration of Angels in our riper Years.*

The next period wherein the angels minister to heaven's heirs, is, from their riper years unto their death. And in order to this, we shall first observe their ministration; and, secondly, our duties.

I. For their ministration, I shall follow the same method as before.

1. That it is so, the scriptures abundantly prove, Psa. 34. 8. Psa. 91. 11, 12. Gen. 19. 15, 16. 2 Kings 6. 16, 17. If I may give instances, Lot was led out of Sodom by an angel; Daniel was taught by an angel; Cornelius was answered by an angel; an angel appeared to Joseph, Mary, Zachary, Peter, Paul, on several errands. Scarce any remarkable thing befell the people of God, but it was accomplished by the ministry of angels. But what needs more? "are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"

SECT. II.—*Of the Kinds of Angel-ministration at that Time, as to our Bodies.*

2. For the kinds of their ministration, it runs in several streams: as, first, to our bodies; secondly, to our souls.

1st. For our bodies.

1. They keep us from evil: so they did in our infancy; but now they do it with this limitation, "they keep us in all our ways," (i. e.) in all those courses appointed us by God. The devil left out that clause in the psalm, when he set Jesus Christ on a pinnacle of the temple, and tempted him to cast himself down: he told him the promise, that the angels should keep him; but he omitted the main point, "in all his ways." Certainly there is some special treasure enclosed in this, or the devil would never have concealed it from our Saviour: then we may expect angel-protection, when we are in the ways God hath appointed us; it was no way for Christ to cast himself down headlong from the pinnacle, for the way lay down the stairs: if we keep not in our ways, neither will the angels keep us from external evils: the prophet that went out of his way, and beyond the bounds appointed him by God, "a lion met him by the way, and slew him."

But do not many external evils befall God's people, even walking in the ways and courses appointed them by God? I answer,—

It cannot be denied, but that sometimes such things do befall the godly: Mephibosheth, a child of five years old, son to a good father, and afterwards a good man himself, was lamed by a fall from his flying nurse. Satan was permitted by God to destroy the goods, children, and health of Job, though by the Spirit of God he was styled "a perfect and an upright man, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil, and that there was none like him in the earth." 'The Lord (say some) can countermand angelical protection, and give instruction to those powers (in some cases,) to suspend their attendance and care of us, yet the promise is not null, and of none effect, for,—

'1. Angelical attendance doth mitigate the evil, so that God's people do not utterly miscarry; they may be "troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." Angels are not always to keep us from, but sometimes in troubles; Christ could have prayed that many legions of angels should have kept him from suffering, this he did not, yet the angels ministered unto him in the wilderness, and in the garden, where he sweat drops of blood.

'2. The promise of angel-protection (as all temporal promises) runs with this tacit reservation and condition, always provided,

that God in his infinite wisdom, for reasons best known to himself, do not judge the contrary more conducive to his glory, and our inward good: we know Job was afflicted, that he might be tried, and the Lord doth sometimes suspend the protection of his angels, that we may the more depend upon himself; as the nurse gets behind the screen, that the infant may go into the mother's arms without crying; if the angels do not help us, it is that we may call upon God for aid.'

2. They keep us in health; so they did in our infancy, but the promise runs without limitation to every age of our life; "Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence:—A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right-hand, but it shall not come nigh thee:" and the reason follows, "for he shall give his angels charge over thee." And the conclusion is this, "With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation." It is the opinion of good divines, that good angels help to remove diseases, and to conserve bodily health; and, on the contrary, evil angels are God's instruments of inflicting sore and grievous maladies. As in the midst of his agonies, the Lord Jesus (saith one) was comforted and refreshed by an angel, Luke 22. 43. so are the angels with the faithful, helping and easing them in their sickness.—For my own part (saith another) I believe that God's works in the world are usually by instruments, and not immediate; and that good angels are his instruments in conveying his mercies both to soul and body, and that evil angels are instruments of inflicting his judgments both corporal and spiritual. Hence God is said to send his evil angels among the Israelites, Psa. 78. 49. Hence Satan did execution on the children, cattle, and body of Job: so then I judge that Satan is the instrument in our ordinary diseases, &c. And I may add, on the same grounds, that the angels are the instruments in continuing or restoring our bodily health.—The ministry of angels (saith a third) is for the promoting of our health; I mean not only of the health of the soul, but of our bodily health: no question but the devils, who are our enemies, and continually stand about us, would quickly rush upon our bodies, and either tear them, or affect them with divers maladies, but that the good angels do defend us by divine command. I cannot deny, but that sometimes God afflicts men by the ministry of his holy and blessed angels; for Sodom was destroyed by the angels; and Sennacherib's host was slain by the angels; and David saw the angel of the Lord, having a drawn sword in his hand, and stretched out over Jerusalem; and an angel of the Lord smote Herod, and he was eaten of worms: but this is not God's ordinary dispensation towards his saints. Surely their ordinary employments, and wherein they delight, is according to the promise, "He shall give his angels charge over thee."

3. They carefully furnish us with all other necessaries for this life. Thus when the Israelites were in the wilderness, they were provided for by the angels: "Man did eat angels' food, he sent them meat to the full;" or, as others translate, "Man did eat the bread of the mighties, he sent them meat to satiety:" It is all one; for what is the bread of the mighties, but the bread of the angels, which are mighty in strength? And manna is called their bread, either because it came from heaven, the habitation of the angels, or because it was excellent, so as the angels (if they needed any food) might eat it; or especially (as I think) because God sent it by the ministry of angels, they were the purveyors of it for the Israelites. Thus when Elijah went into the wilderness, and lay and slept under a juniper-tree, "behold, an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat: and he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water on his head; and he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise, and eat." The same God that provided for him in the time of drought by the ministry of ravens, now again fed him by the ministry of angels. I know these provisions were miraculous; but where no miracles are, the angels have an hand even in ordinary provisions. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him:" And what then? "O fear the Lord, ye his saints, for there is no want to them that fear him; the young lions do lack, and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing." I know we see not the angels providing for us; but what then? Abraham's servants saw no angel going along with him, and yet Abraham could say, "The Lord God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, he shall send his angel before thee:" The Israelites saw no angel going along with them, and yet the Lord could say, "I will send an angel before thee, and I will drive out the Canaanites," &c. For my part, I see no angel removing me from place to place, yet I am fully persuaded, that no minister of Christ removes his station, or goes to a people as their pastor, but an angel of God, or the God of angels, doth so order it: This is the office of angels (saith Zanchy) by a command of God, to send the doctors of the church to such or such a people: accordingly, it was an angel that appeared to Paul in a vision by night, saying, "Come over to Macedonia, and help us." Eusebius tells us a like story of Alexander bishop of Jerusalem, that after his agonies, and constancy of confession, shewed in the persecution of Severus, he was admonished by a vision in the night-season to take his journey up to Jerusalem; and drawing near to the city, a vision, with plain words, was given to certain chief heads of Jerusalem to go out of the gates of the city, and there to receive the bishop appointed them by God: And though

vision or revelation, I have none, yet (as the most reverend doctor said) since I am convinced that the unfelt hands of the angels are in many occurrences of my life, I have learned so much wit and grace, as rather to yield them too much, than too little stroke, in ordering all my concernments for this life. It is true, their appearings are ceased, but not their workings; their converse is not so sensible, yet it is as real as ever it was before.

SECT. III.—*Of the Kinds of Angel-ministration at that time, as to our Souls.*

2. FOR our souls:—

1. The angels declare to us what is the will and mind of God. Thus Daniel being troubled with the visions of his head, he went near unto one of the angels which stood by, and asked him the truth and meaning of them. "So he told me, (saith Daniel,) and made me know the interpretation of the things." And in another vision, when Daniel sought the meaning: "Behold, there stood before me (said he) as the appearance of a man; and I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision."—And he said unto me, Understand, O son of man. And at another time, the man Gabriel, whom he had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched him about the time of the evening oblation, and informed him, and talked with him, and said, "O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding." Nothing is more usual in God's word, than for angels to inform the saints what is the will and mind of God; the conception of Christ, and the birth of Christ, and the death of Christ, and the resurrection of Christ, and the ascension of Christ, and his return to judgment, were all told by the angels; only you may look upon these as extraordinaries, and that apparitions of angels, and such teachings or enlightenings of our understanding, in these days you cannot expect. All this I grant, and yet withal I add, that if visibly they do not teach us, they may do it invisibly; yea, and I verily believe they do in ordinary, though invisibly, teach and instruct all the people of God.

But how can that be, when they do neither speak to us, nor reason with us, after the manner of men?

I answer; They have other ways of speaking, or of reasoning with us: as,—

1st. They understand us, though we neither speak to them, nor reason with them: One of our light, in his *Child of Light walking in Darkness*, tells us, that evil angels know much within us, and to that purpose they have more advantages than we men have to know one another by: for,—

1. Those spirits can discern all corporeal actions; and though the species, in them, and their manner of knowing corporeal things, differ from ours, yet they are analogical with ours.

2. They make it their business to study men, it is their trade to go up and down, and consider men; "Hast thou not considered (says God to Satan) my servant Job?"

3. They are and can be present at all our more retired actions; they are with us at bed and board, in all companies, and in all solitary places.

4. By what they see outwardly of our actions, they may guess at our inwards, which are as the principles of them.

5. They have an insight into the fancy, and the images therein, which follow and imitate the inward thoughts of the mind, as the shadow doth the body: in this respect they go into a room further than we can go, yea, into a room next to the privy chamber, which yet remains fast locked up unto them. This last goes beyond all the former; and yet (saith my author) all divines grant, that the devils may know and discern our phantasms intuitively, as we do things which are present before us.

6. As they may see into the fancy, so, if God permit, evil angels may go into the head, and see those very images and species in the fancy, that are for the present in direct conjunction with the understanding, and which it is then thinking and musing of. Indeed the immediate knowledge of our thoughts, and hearts, and understandings, is proper only to God; "I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins;" yet arguitive, and as they do transpire, and appear in the images of the fancy, and so, *quasi in aliis,* and mediately, they may be very far discerned and looked into by evil angels; and so by discerning those very phantasms which the understanding actually at present vieweth, and maketh use of, they may then judge what it is that the mind for the present is musing on: all this is discussed at large concerning the evil angels.

And if the evil angels may know thus much of what is within us, do not the good angels know thus much? The evil angels have by their sin lost much of their knowledge, and therefore are called darkness, and the power of darkness, because they are exceedingly dark in themselves, and in comparison of the holy angels; but the good angels never sinned, and therefore never were deprived of the least measure of knowledge conferred on them. I must therefore conclude, that, without speaking to them or reasoning with them after the manner of men, they understand as well, (or wherein they do not, God is pleased often to discover it to them by an especial dispensation of favour and grace,) as to the angel in Daniel was revealed the mystery of the seventy weeks.

2d. We may understand them, though they never speak to us, or reason with us, and so we are capable of their teaching; you will say, how may we do that? I answer,—

1. Observe we their work upon our fancies; there they are busy day and night, to set together the images for our understanding

of them: Look, as a compositor, in printing, takes his letters that lie confused afore him, and orders and sets them in words and sentences, to represent to the reader's eye what he would have read by him; so do the angels set and compose the images in our fancies, to represent to our understanding such things as they would have us know: it is good therefore to observe their work day and night, for they may work on our fancies in our dreams.

2. Set we ourselves to think or muse upon those images set together by them. Thus when the angel Gabriel saluted Mary, it is said, that "she cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be." And after the angels had appeared to shepherds, and that all wondered at those things which the shepherds told them, it is said, that "Mary kept all those things, and pondered them in her heart." Certainly it is our duty, when angels have been communicating their minds to us, to ponder, and muse, and meditate, and to cast in our mind what manner of communication this should be.

3. Try we their work upon our fancies, whether it be agreeable to the word of God: It were sad, if we should take that for the speaking of angels, which is the very voice of devils; now though evil spirits can transform themselves into angels of light, yet they may be discerned, if we will try their work by the word. The good angels are distinguished from the bad, either by their apparitions, or by their actions; the former I omit, for the latter poet gives them in thus:

> Who so will sift their actions, he shall find,
> By their success, if well or ill inclin'd,
> The one from other; for the blessed still
> Square all their actions to th' Almighty's will,
> And to man's profit:———
> The cacodæmons labour all they can
> Against God's honour and the good of man.

Indeed, this is a sure and indubitable character; the good angels never speak any thing contrary to the word, or, which is all one, the good angels are employed in nothing save the honour of God, and the profit and preservation of good men; but evil spirits aim all their enterprises and endeavours to derogate from God's worship, and to assume it to themselves, and by their flattering deceptions and oily insinuations with man, to work the utter subversion both of body and soul. It is good therefore to try their works upon our fancies, and, if we find it agreeable to God's word, or if it aim at God's honour and man's profit, we may conclude, this was the speaking of an angel of God.

But methinks I hear some object,—You tell us of a work of angels upon our fancies day and night; and indeed in the night we can more easily observe some such like impressions or work

upon us in our dreams: but are not these things spoken against? was not this the way of false prophets, to observe their dreams, and by them to delude the people, saying, "I have dreamed, I have dreamed?" Jer. 23. 25.

I answer,—Such dreams as tend to the leading of men from the holy word of God, to wicked doctrines or opinions, which are painted over with the pretence or colour of revelations and divine visions, when they are indeed the mere delusions of Satan, transforming himself into an angel of light, are not to be heeded, but rejected; and such were the dreams of the false prophets, tending to idolatry, against whom God spake; "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or wonder come to pass, whereof he spoke unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, (whom thou hast not known,) and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken to the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul."

Yet this hinders not, but such dreams as come into us by God's special and sometimes extraordinary work of providence, must needs be directed unto some weighty and good end, as we must conclude, if we either consider the first mover, which is God, or the instruments, which are his holy angels: such dreams will challenge our very serious consideration, and diligent care to take notice of what they offer unto us, and the neglect or contempt thereof cannot be committed without great impiety; and therefore we have not only a warrant, but an unavoidable and inviolable obligation in point of duty, to take notice of such dreams, and to make use of them according to their importance and purpose: "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed, then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction."

But because dreams are of several sorts, some proceeding only from the constitution of the heavens, or from the disposition of the air, or from previous cogitations, or from the temper of the body, or from the affection of the mind, or from the procuration of the devil, and only some few from the operation of good angels; it is therefore worthy our pains to know some such marks or characters, whereby we may distinguish these last from all others of the former dreams.

A learned writer, in his book of the *Baptized Turk*, hath laid down these marks of those dreams procured by angels:

1. When they move unto that which is truly and eminently good, or from the contrary evil, and have nothing in them that stands opposite to the truth or holiness of the word of God, or sound reason, nor that addeth any thing to God's words, as a new way of righteousness or salvation.

2. When they are of a wise, sober, just, and orderly frame and composure, without any tincture of lightness, jingling, or vanity in them.

3. When they come unto us, being in an holy temper and disposition of spirit.

4. When they leave both an holy, and humble, and also a strong and certain impression upon the mind, moving it not upon carnal, but spritual principles and motives; to which we may add, an holy clearness and consolation in the spirit, an increase of vigour and readiness to godly obedience and holiness.

5. When they agree with some work that God hath in hand, and have something in them that seems to be above human inventions, and have an excellent agreement in the several parts thereof, presenting the same or several things.

6. When they come unsought and unexpected; for if any man doth purposely seek divination by dreams, composing himself thereunto by superstitious rights or ceremonies, this were expressly against the word: "For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Let not your prophets and your diviners, that be in the midst of you, deceive you; neither hearken to your dreams, which ye cause to be dreamed."—But enough of this matter.

2. The angels persuade us to that which is good; they do not only declare to us what is God's will, but they advise us to it. This is the ordinary office of blessed angels, to instil good motions, to suggest good thoughts, to admonish and persuade us on all occasions to that which is good. As Satan is ever compassing the earth, seeking whom he may devour, here and there laying his snares to catch poor souls in, tempting and enticing them to all sorts of sin, as he espies occasion and opportunity for it; so are the good angels ever and anon suggesting good and pious thoughts; they tacitly admonish our minds, and provoke us to good duties of holiness and obedience: this makes some affirm, that whatsoever the evil angels can do in evil, the elect angels can do in good: if the devils can suggest sin, surely the angels of God are stronger and wiser than devils.

But how do the good angels suggest good?

I answer, 1. They inspire, inject, or cast into our minds, some holy motions: seldom passes the day over our heads, but we may feel these injections—Come, this is the way, walk in it; Strive to enter in at the strait gate, &c.

2. They provoke and stir us up with much impunity to this or that duty; "Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," &c. They know well enough our sluggish, dull, and heavy dispositions, our spiritual laziness, and therefore they add stirring, quickening, soul-enlivening expressions, or exclamations, "Ho, come ye to the waters;" yea, they double it, or treble it, "Come ye to the waters;—Come ye, buy and eat;—Come

ye, buy wine and milk without money and without price: " They are not willing to give over, till they have made us willing to yield to their motions for our own salvation.

You may object, Surely this is the genuine work of the Holy Ghost, thus to inspire and provoke us to good. Very true, and yet that hinders not but that the good angels may be instruments, or agents: We say, the Holy Ghost is the prime Spirit, and yet the angels are as ministering spirits; the Holy Ghost is the fountain, or head of water, but the angels are as cisterns and channels of water; it is the will of the Holy Ghost to employ the angels, and to communicate himself to us by the ministry of angels, and therefore the Holy Ghost and angels need not clash. Indeed, motions, inspirations, and holy suggestions, are ever originally and primarily for the Spirit of Christ; and hence it is, that commonly we put them all on that score, we give them all to Christ's spirit; yet I cannot forget the author's opinion I cited before, that God's works in the world are usually by instruments, and not immediate; and that good angels are his instruments, in conveying his mercies both to soul and body. Another speaks as confidently every whit; For my part, (with the good leave of my learned and religious brethren, be it spoken,) I doubt not but good angels suggest good counsels, tender holy motions, offer pious thoughts, yea, refresh the often-parched spirits of gracious men with inward joy. Shall the devil work in the children of disobedience? (Ephes. 2. 2.) enormously disquiet the affections, (1 Sam. 16. 15.) yea, inject wicked thoughts into godly men with success, (1 Chron. 21. 1.) and shall the good angels be excluded from all actions and operations upon the inward senses of men?—I can never believe it.

3. The angels repel temptations, or prevent occasions of sin. This was the meaning of Michael's contending with the devil about the body of Moses. It was the devil's design to discover Moses' grave, and the archangel was ready to resist him! But why should the angel resist him? To what end was the dispute about the body of Moses? Why might not the body and burial-place of Moses have been discovered to all? Surely the angel would not have it known, lest the people should have idolized and worshipped it in after times. The devil loves idolatry; and of all kinds of idolatry, the devil abuseth the world most with idolatrous respects to the bodies and relics of dead saints. Now, the archangel knew his design, and therefore he would by no means have those burial-places known. Thus Ainsworth paraphraseth on that text of Deuteronomy, " He was buried in the valley of Moab, over against Beth-peor; but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. The angel would have no occasion of superstition or idolatry thereby: Oh what blessed steps have we for preventing of sin! How busy are the angels in our behalf, (when we little think of it,) to repel

temptations, and to prevent occasions of evil? As our good endeavours are often hindered by Satan,—"I would have come to you, even I Paul, once and again, but Satan hindered us;"—so are our evil actions hindered by the heavenly angels, else were not our protection equal to our danger. A good angel opposed Balaam in an evil way; and if an heavenly spirit obstruct the course of the evil, and stand in the way of a sorcerer's sin, how much more ready are those spiritual powers to stop the spiritual miscarriages of God's dearest children.

4. The angels quicken our dulness, encourage our weakness, and comfort us in our sorrows: all these may be read together in one chapter: "I was in a dead sleep (said Daniel) on my face, and my face towards the ground, and behold an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees, and upon the palms of my hands; and he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright, for unto thee am I now sent: and when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling; then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel.—And there came again, and touched me one like the appearance of a man; and he strengthened me, and said, O man greatly beloved, fear not, peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong; and when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my Lord speak, for thou hast strengthened me." In like manner we find an angel quickening, encouraging, and strengthening Elijah to his work, 2 Kings 1. 3, 15. and Isaiah to his work, Isa. 6. 6, 7. and Paul to his work, Acts 27. 23, 24. But especially in the sufferings of his saints, how usual was it with God to send down his angels for their comforters! When Christ was in his agony, "there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him." When Peter was in prison, "behold the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison." When Paul was in his dangerous voyage, "there stood by him that night the angel of God, whose he was, and whom he served, saying, Fear not, Paul," Acts 27. 23. In the succeeding times of the church, how frequently did the angels appear to blessed martyrs for their comfort and encouragement! Thus Theodorus saw and felt the refreshing hand of an angel: thus Theophilah, Agnes, Lucia, Cecilia, and others, saw the good angels as their comforters, and protectors of their chastity. And although they do not appear to us now in bodily shapes, as in those times, yet the same offices are performed by them in their spiritual and mysterious ways; now they quicken our dulness, encourage our weakness, and comfort us in heaviness.

Sect. IV.—*Whether the Angels contribute any thing to our Conversion.*

Before I pass this, I would propound a question or two: as,—

1. Whether the angels contribute any thing to our conversion? We have heard at large, that devils do what they can to hinder our conversion: and are the angels less active to good, than they are to evil? I cannot think it. We may be sure, that as the bad angels do bad offices, so the good angels are in their way prompt and ready to do all the good offices they can, as to our good; and my reason is, their will is conformed to the will of God, "They do his commandments, they hearken to the voice of his word." Whatsoever God wills, they will: now God wills the conversion of sinners; "As I live, I desire not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent and live;" and therefore they will it, and, as they will it, so they reduce that will into several acts, or else it were in vain. But what those acts are may be another question.

Sect. V.—*Wherein do the Angels contribute to our Conversion.*

The several acts of angels as to our conversion, are such as these:—

1. They inform our judgments: we have heard before, how they invisibly teach us, instruct us, enlighten us, and herein do they contribute to our conversion: for what is the first work of conversion, but illumination? As in the first creation, the first-born of God's works was light, "God said, let there be light, and there was light:" so, in the new creation, the first work is light;" "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Hence the state of nature is called darkness, and the state of grace is called light; "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord;" and, "He hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." Now, if in this work the angels are assistant, they must needs contribute to our conversion in the first work of it, which is illumination.

2. They move our will: This is that we said before, that the good angels persuade us to that which is good, they instil good motions, they suggest good thoughts, they provide us to duties of holiness and obedience, and especially to this main work of conversion and regeneration; well they know, that without this, all is nothing; "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And their desires are strong, that the places made void in heaven by the falling angels, should be supplied by men and women; and therefore they do what they can to move and persuade us to a change. I know they cannot efficiently move or turn the will; we leave to Christ and his Spirit the efficacy and blessing of all; they only move, and persuade, and make use of arguments, to do this or that, but the holy Spirit makes effectual, and gives the issue to what they move. If you

say, What needs this ministration, for Christ can move or persuade without them? I may as well ask, What need ministers, preaching, sacraments? It is enough to silence and stop our mouths, when we hear that these are God's ways of administration, these are God's ordinances, of which the angels are a great part; and according to the good pleasure of God, they act, and stir, and move, and persuade us to conversion.

3. They work on our affections, endeavouring to settle them, and keep them on right objects: It is true, they cannot turn the stream and current of our affections back, (God only can turn this Jordan back,) but they can drive them faster, and cause them to swell above their natural channels; it is the spirit of bondage which worketh fear, but when fear is wrought, they can blow it up, and intend it more, as the Spirit's instruments. Sometimes you have heard how evil angels could work further and deeper fears than the Holy Ghost by himself intended; and cannot the good angels do regularly, what the evil angels can do irregularly? If the evil angels cannot only propound such objects as shall move us to fear, but also can stir up such humours in the body, which such a passion doth act and stir in:—*Ex. gr.* If they can electively work upon melancholy, so as to put a man into a timorous and trembling disposition; how much more can the good angels propound objects, and stir up humours, and so work on the affections, whether of fear, or hope, or sorrow, or joy, or love, or hatred?

4. They repel temptations. You have heard abundantly how the soul is haunted with several temptations; when the work of conversion is passing upon it, then is Satan busy, by way of revenge, for the soul's revolt from him; but are not the good angels as busy as Satan? and if they resist him, what can all the troops of hell hurt us? We know the good angels have as much advantage of their strength over Satan, as they have of their station; how then should that evil one stand in the encounter? or what need we fear in so mighty and sure hands? He that passeth with a strong convoy through a wild and perilous desert, scorns the dangers of wild beasts or robbers, no less than if he were in a strong tower at home; so may we the onsets of the powers of darkness, whilst we are guarded by the angels, who both defend us, and resist Satan in all his fiery darts.

5. The joy in the conversion of sinners, so that heaven rings with the joy: "Likewise I say unto you, (saith Christ,) there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." What manner of joy this is, is unknown to us, and so shall be, until that time, that time shall be no more; only this we believe for the present, that the conversion of sinners is the jubilation of angels; and this, I take it, is the plain sense or meaning of Christ's words, that when they see the ranks and files of lapsed angels filled with new recruits, men and women,

penitent for their sins, this is matter of joy, of ecstatical joy, to the holy angels of God.

SECT. VI.—*Experiences of this Truth, as to our outward Man.*

FOR some experience of this blessed truth, in respect of our bodies :—

1. They keep us from evil.

One going seasonably to bed, about midnight he awoke, and could not sleep; there upon he awaked his wife, and talking with her, suddenly he espied a light in his chamber, which came through a box-hole ; he demanded of her what that light was ; she opened her eyes, but could not tell ; anon she arose out of bed, and looking through the box-hole, (which by a gracious Providence was that night open, though usually shut,) she espied a fire kindled on some wood in the house, which quickly would have set all in a flame, that no way they could have escaped with life: but they both hastened out of their chamber, and, coming into the house, they timously quench the fire, and admiring at God's providence in each circumstance, they returned in safety to bed, and found that rest and sleep after, which before they could not obtain.

The same person riding over a deep water, his horse in the midst of the stream laid him down under him : thus man and horse both plunged in ; the man with much ado having recovered himself, and getting through, he rode home wet and cold, which cast him into a fever ; yet in time he recovered, and blessed that God, who, by the ministry of his angels, delivered him from the danger both of fire and water.

The same person being at home, a daughter came to visit him, who one evening was very importunate to go more early than ordinarily they used to bed ; her importunity so far prevailed, that presently they went to prayers, and commending themselves to God for his custody, all in the family made up the stairs to their several lodgings : no sooner were they dropped asleep, but presently a noise, like thunder, awaked them all ; he wondered, and asked his wife if she heard the thunder; who answered, that she being last in bed, was scarcely asleep, but could not tell whether it was a clap of thunder, or a fall of some part of the house ; and rising out of bed to go to the chamber were their daughter and a servant maid lay in two beds ; at the entrance into the chamber, the daughter cried, Stay, mother, or you endanger your life, for I believe the chamber floor, and chamber adjoining, is fallen down. By that caution she trembling stayed her foot, and drew back to tell her husband the news; he desired her to go down stairs into the house, light a candle, and to see the matter ; but endeavouring to open the door below into the house, the passage was stopped with the floor of the chambers fallen

down: their daughter, that lay in one of the two chambers, seated over the house, cried, that her bed cracked, and she was afraid to lie in it; thereupon they advised her to hasten out of it, and with the maid to creep into a corner of the chamber which was more secure. In the mean time, a cry or call was made through a casement for some neighbour's help; by this means a candle was brought, but no passage being possible through the doors, the stanchion of a casement was cut, and one came in at the window with his light; then it was seen how two chambers over the house were suddenly fallen, with all the weight of wood, and clay, and furniture above, and that nothing remained unfallen, but a little room of one chamber, where the two beds stood, wherein the two women lay. At first view they all stood amazed, but recollecting themselves, the two women were by a ladder safely brought down from the corner of the fallen chamber, and being brought into another chamber, they took their rest till the morning. At day-light they saw their wonderful preservation; and, viewing the circumstances, it appeared: 1. If that night all had not gone to bed before their ordinary time, they had been all sitting in the house, which then would have fallen upon them, and have slain them all. 2. If his wife had not then stayed her step, when the daughter cried, Stay mother, she had fallen down into the nether room amongst rubbish, and probably had lost her life. 3. If those two beds had not stood, wherein the two women lay, when all besides fell with one crash, they had both perished, especially the daughter, who was in the first stage of her pregnancy. In every circumstance appeared the finger of God, and the promise was minded, "He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways; they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone."

Simon Grinæus, a learned and holy man, coming from Heidelburgh to Spires, was desirous to hear a certain preacher in that city, who in his sermon did then let fall some erroneous propositions of popish doctrine; wherewith Grinæus, not being a little offended, craved speedy conference with the preacher, and, laying before him the falsehood and danger of his doctrines, exhorted him to an abandoning and retraction of those misopinions; the preacher gave good words and fair semblances to Grinæus, desiring farther and more particular conference with him, and each imparted to other their names and lodgings; yet inwardly, as being stung with that just reproof, he resolved a revenge, by procuring the imprisonment, and, if he might, the death of so sharp a censurer. Grinæus, misdoubting nothing, upon his return to his lodgings, reports the passages of the late conference to those who sat at the table with him, amongst whom Melancthon being one, he was called out of the room to speak with a stranger, newly come into the house: going forth accordingly, he finds a grave old man, of a goodly countenance, seemly

and richly attired, who in a friendly and grave manner tells him, that within one hour there would come to their inn certain officers, as from the king of the Romans, to attach Grinæus, and so carry him to prison; willing him to charge Grinæus, with all possible speed, to flee out of Spires, and requiring Melancthon to see that this advantage were not neglected; which said, the old man vanished out of his sight. Instantly Melancthon, returning to his companions, recounted unto them the words of this strange monitor, and hastened the departure of Grinæus accordingly, who had no sooner boated himself on the Rhine, than he was eagerly sought for at his said lodgings. Of this, Melancthon, in his commentary on Daniel, writes, and acknowledges God's fatherly providence in sending this angel of his for the rescue of his faithful servant.

John Spangenberge, pastor of Northense, was no sooner stept out of his house, with his family, to go to the bains, but the house fell right down in the place.—Our own experience at home is able to furnish us with divers such instances: If a man by some strong instinct be warned to change that lodging, which he constantly held for some years, and finds his wonted sleeping place that night crushed with the unexpected fall of an unsuspected contiguation; to what cause can we attribute this, but to our attending angels?—Or, have we been preserved from mortal dangers, which we could not tell how by our providence to have evaded? Our invisible guardians have done it.

In the true portraiture of his sacred majesty Charles the Second, it appears, that by God this king reigns, in that he hath exercised those providences over him, that are hardly exercised over ten thousands of us; that star in the east, at his highness's birth, speaks much this way: the powers in heaven, that so watchfully guarded him through those sad days, wherein thousands fell at his right-hand and ten thousands at his left, aimed at some great prize: his royal life (the care of angels) must not go out privately, and be lost unprofitably in a corner. Oh how the angels forbade those millions of profane hands, that would rudely have touched the Lord's anointed! His escape at Worcester was almost miraculous: he sought his way all along five miles from Worcester; then he turned to the less-frequented ways that could be, until he came to the borders of Staffordshire; then he removed to an adjoining wood, where he, and one only with him, walked securely awhile, until they found an oak for majesty, in the hollow of which he lodged himself for three days and nights, until my Lord Wilmot providing for his majesty a safe lodging, and then seeking him in the wood, with much ado found his sacred person guarded, and (as I may say) fed by angels.

2. They keep us in, or restore us to health.

One going to London, inned and lodged all night at the Maiden-head in Cateaton-street, where the same night died a

young wife of the pestilence; as another had died before, the sickness and death of the parties being concealed: he arose in the morning, and took some repast, and went about his occasions; but at his return in the afternoon, as he was going into the inn, a friend called him back, and told him the truth; in the midst of the discourse, he saw the gates shut before his eyes, and presently was written upon them, Lord, have mercy upon us. This hath minded him of God's providence and promise, "Surely he shall deliver thee from the noisome pestilence, for he shall give his angels charge over thee."

John Trelille, a poor cripple in Cornwall, that for sixteen years together was fain to walk upon his hands, by reason of the close contraction of the sinews of his legs; upon three monitions in his dream, to wash in a well called Maderness, was suddenly so restored to his limbs, that I saw him (saith my author) able both to walk, and to get his own maintenance.—Marcus Aurelius Antonius, in his dream received the prescript of a remedy of his disease, which the physicians could not cure: whence came this, but by the suggestion of angels? Have we been raised up from deadly sickness, when all natural helps have given us up? God's angels have been our secret physicians.—*Bishop Hall.*

3. They furnish us with all necessaries for this life.

Mr. Samuel, a godly minister in Queen Mary's days, was convented before Bishop Bonner, who committed him to prison, and there chained him up to a post, in such sort, that standing on tiptoes he was fain to bear up all the weight of his body in that manner, to his intolerable pain; besides, he allowed him but three morsels of bread and three spoonfuls of water a day, so that he was extremely tormented with hunger and thirst, and had his body so miserably dried up, that he would fain have drunk his own water, but he could not make one drop. But after he had continued in this miserable case three days, he fell asleep, and one clad all in white seemed to stand before him, telling him, that from henceforth he should neither hunger nor thirst any more; which also came to pass, though he was not burnt till many days after.—*White's Power of Godliness.*

A doctor of divinity, of singular learning and piety, sent his maid to the market, to get provision for the following week. But all the money he and his wife could make, was but five shillings; his wife fell a weeping, and told her husband, that there was little likelihood they could live together, and that therefore she would take one or two of her children with her, and live among her friends, if he could provide for himself and the rest of his children. Nay, dear wife, said he, we have lived thus long together, let us not now part, let us rely on God's providence. She in her grief and haste answered, Well, send Providence to market, and see what it will bring home. It was so that day, that a nobleman,

who knew this doctor very well, dining with divers gentlemen at an inn, looking out of the window, saw the doctor's maid, whom, being an ancient servant, he knew, sent for her up, asking her how her master did? she answered, Very well, and fell a weeping: he inquiring the cause, she told him what straits they were brought to; he, wondering, and being troubled at it, called the innkeeper, and wished him to give that maid ten pounds, and every one of the gentlemen gave twenty shillings apiece. So the doctor, sending Providence (of which the angels are servants and instruments) to market, it brought him home fifteen pounds. Doubtless it is because we do not trust, not because God either cannot or will not give, that makes us so often want mercies; and such providences would be usual, if our confidence in God were but so.—*Idem ibidem.*

There was a certain poor family, who being in great want, and having little or nothing for the children in it; when dinner came, they put them off with playthings, and told them they would see if they could get them something for supper; and when supper came, they would give some small piece of bread, and so get them to bed: and thus they used them so long, while at last the children would not go to bed, but cried for bread. That night it was so, that the Lord Faulkland, waking before midnight, could not sleep; and then it came into his mind that this family was in great want, insomuch that he called up some of his servants, and sent them with a great loaf and a cheese to the house; when they came, they found the children crying for bread, and the parents weeping by them, who with a great deal of joy and eagerness received that unexpected provision. Thus the Lord ordered it by his providence, that they were not only then relieved, but their necessities being related to the Lord Faulkland, he took care of them for the future.—*Idem ibidem.*

Luther hath this story: A certain woman, in the time of famine, having nothing at all for her children and herself to eat, being brought to very great extremity, she resolved upon this course; she made herself and all her children ready, and with a great deal of comfort and confidence she walked to a spring, not far from her house: as she was going, one met her, who asked her whither was she going with her children; she told him, that all her provision was quite spent, and she was going with her children to such a fountain close by, being confident that God, that had provided drink for her and her children, would there provide food for them also; and he that heard the young ravens, and provided for them, would much more take care of her, and her little ones: he that met her, wished her to return home, for she should meet with provision that was ready for her there: she returned, and found a considerable quantity of meal, which was food for her and her children; but whence this provision came, she knew not, nor knew the man who told her of it.

SECT. IV.—*Experiences of this Truth, as to our Inward Man.*

3. FOR some experiences of this blessed truth, in respect of our souls :—

1. They declare to us God's will; of old they did so to Abraham, Lot, Moses, Jacob, Manoah, Gideon, David, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Zachary: and in the New Testament they did so to Joseph, Mary, Zachariah, the shepherds, Mary Magdalen, Peter, Philip, Cornelius, Paul, John the evangelist, and to all the apostles. At this time they do not invisibly declare God's will, nor must we trust to visions or revelations; yet many times they teach us by dreams, and many times they coin impressions on our fancy and imaginations whilst we are waking: they can make rare and wonderful compositions of what they find in us: so that to me, here is the difference between the converse of men and angels; men can speak to the understanding by the mediation of our external senses, but the angels go a nearer way to work, and speak first of all to the internal senses, making such compositions there as the understanding presently takes off, and reads what is written: Do we not, waking and sleeping, see impressions in our fancy, of things that we thought we had forgotten? This is done by the angels.

One being a long while trained up in ceremonies, notionals, fables, unprofitable matter, rather than sound and saving knowledge, which is in faith; at last, conversing with some godly men, and with practical books, he found some impressions in his fancy of another kind of divinity, and so inclined, that divinity was rather practical than speculative; and that such kind of preaching as was usually delivered in an affected spruceness of language, and vain-glorious trimness of the windy and dead letter, would never save souls. These impressions were more and more fixed in him, and at last he was satisfied, that many poor illiterate souls, that felt the power of godliness on their own hearts, had more true knowledge of divinity, than many learned doctors and rabbies, that had nothing but orthodoxy, or a swimming knowledge of truth; and that many unlearned snatched heaven, and took it by violence, while many learned with their learning perished, and went down to hell. The efficacy of this light he gives to the Spirit, but the instrumentality of it, as working upon the fancy or imagination, he ascribes to the angels.

A godly woman, falling into great dissertions, at last the Lord in secret prayer came in with abundance of light and comfort; but within a month after, she being to receive the Lord's supper, all her former tears and troubles returned upon her, insomuch, that a little before the bread was administered to her, though she could not say that the devil appeared to her in a bodily shape, yet he seemed to her as if he did, and told her, that she should not eat;

but then the Lord was pleased to bring into her mind that passage in the Canticles, "Eat, O my friends:" Notwithstanding, Satan still continued terrifying of her, and when she had eaten, told her, she should not drink; but the Lord brought that second clause of the verse into her mind, "Drink, yea drink abundantly, my beloved;" and so she drank also, and presently was filled with such unspeakable joys, that she knew not how she got home; which soul-ravishing joys continued for a fortnight after, and filled her mouth with songs of praise, so that she could neither sleep, nor eat, more than she forced herself to do out of conscience of duty.—*White.*

2. They advise us to that which is good.

The light being presented to one, as before, many blessed motions came in, to make the beginning of saving practical truth; and this he understood was the doctrine of regeneration; and therefore, if ever he would be happy, he must have some feeling of that. Many objections were raised, that the wind bloweth where it listeth; and we are not sufficient of ourselves to think; and it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, &c. The objections are not formally now remembered: but notwithstanding them, the motions to fall on the work continued fresh, and finding them daily upon his spirit, at last he submitted willingly to those inspirations, and every day set some time apart to be in the duty; it proved tedious and difficult at first, but afterwards sin appeared very sinful, and the Spirit set it home on his soul, and by degrees successively he was led from a sense of misery, to some hope of mercy in Christ: and before he had done, (though many a day it continued,) the holy Spirit infused faith, whereby he closed with Jesus Christ, as Saviour, and as Lord, and King, and Husband. This work, begun by the angels by instilling good motions, was the joy of angels, when it was perfected: "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

One, about the time of Reformation of religion, desired much of God the guidance and assistance of an angel; and from the thirty-seventh year of his age he had sensible manifestations of a spirit that assisted him, and followed him till his death. In his dreams or visions, he was sometimes admonished of this or that vice, and sometimes advertised of this or that danger, and sometimes resolved of this or that doubt, and sometimes persuaded to this or that duty: Once I heard a voice from heaven, saying, 'I will save thy soul.' Usually in the morning, about the fourth hour, the angel would have beat at his door to have awaked him, and if he had done any good or evil, he would have manifested the approval or disapproval of it by some sign: if in company he had spoken any unwary words, he was sure to be advertised and reproved of it by a dream in the night following: if he had read any book that was not good, the angel would have struck

upon the book, to have caused him to have left it, and laid it aside: Often would the angel have provoked him to prayer, and alms-deeds, and other duties. Bodinus asking him, whether ever he had seen the form of this angel? He answered, that he never saw any thing, but only a bright and shining light in a round orb; and once after prayer upon his bed, that he saw a sweet boy, in white apparel, of admirable beauty.—*Bodinus de Magorum demonomania.*

3. They repeal temptations, or prevent occasions of sin.

One having many temptations offered him, especially in his dreams in the night, he observed, that at the same times such thoughts have come in, that in those very dreams he confidently cried—Avoid, Satan; and again, Avoid, Satan; for it is written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve;" which he believes were put in by the angels.

One Natalius, that had formerly suffered great persecutions for the cause of Christ, was seduced by Asclepiodotus and Theodorus, two sectaries, to be the bishop of their sect, promising to pay him an hundred and fifty crowns of silver every month, and so he joined himself to them; but the Lord in mercy not intending to lose him that had suffered so much for his sake, admonished him by a vision, to adjoin himself to the true church again; which the good man for the present, blinded with lucre and honour, did not regard as he ought to have done. The night after he was scourged by angels, whereupon, in the morning, putting on sackcloth, with much weeping and lamentation, he went to the Christian congregation, praying them, for the tender mercies of Christ, that he might be received into their communion again; which request was accordingly granted unto him.—*Clarke's General Martyrology.*

Cyprian relates a story of one of his fellow-ministers, who in the midst of his torments began to faint, being greatly afraid of death, and desired to be released; at which time there appeared to him a young man of admirable beauty, and so bright, that man's mortal eye could scarce endure to behold him; who angrily said to him, *Pati timetis, exire non vultis, quid faciam vobis? 'To suffer you dare not, to go out you will not, what shall I do with you?'*—Idem. ibid.

4. They quicken, encourage, and comfort us.

A certain godly woman riding behind her husband, who was a persecutor of Mr. Bolton, as they were riding, it thundered and lightned extraordinarily, so that he trembled exceedingly: his wife with a cheerful voice said, Husband, what ails you? why do you tremble thus? He answered, Do you not hear how terribly it thunders? She answered, Yes, I hear it. And, said he, do you not tremble also? She answered, No, she was not at all afraid, for she knew it was but the voice of her Father. He was amazed at her cheerfulness and answer, and began to think with

himself, Surely these Puritans have something within them, that they are able to bear up in such storms; and that they have peace, and are cheerful, while I tremble. And being not far off, immediately he did ride to Master Bolton, beseeching pardon that he had persecuted him, and desired that he would tell him what he should do to be saved.

Thomas Ward, of Tiso, in Warwickshire, was all his younger days very loose and dissolute, an enemy to goodness, and an hater of good men; but it pleased God at last to convert him, after a strange and wonderful manner, which was thus: In a morning, as he lay in his bed, plotting and contriving how to molest and persecute some of his godly neighbours, there appeared a vision to him, of a city, wherein there were many poor ragged lambs in the streets, and a man driving of them; and he heard a voice saying to him, What are these? To which he anwered, Sheep. Then said the voice again, These are my sheep whom thou persecutest. Presently after he saw another vision, of a pile of fagots, and heard the voice, saying, What are these? He answered, Fagots: Then said the voice, As these are bound up for the fire, so thou deservest to be bound hand and foot, and cast into everlasting fire. He answered, Truth, Lord; yet withal he cried earnestly to the Lord for mercy: and presently after he saw in another vision a pillar of brass, but so bright and glorious, that he was not able to look upon it: then said the voice, Be of good comfort, for thou art a chosen vessel, which shall suffer many things for my name's sake. To which he said, Lord, if it be thy will, let it be now: and presently he had a blow given him on his side, as with a dagger, the mark whereof he carried with him to his grave. After this, it pleased God to raise him up with comfort, and he became an eminent professor, and was very zealous for the truth.—*White.*

A little before the eighth persecution began, God by a vision revealed it to Cyprian, saying to him, Be quiet, and of good comfort, for peace will come, albeit a little stay there is for a while, for that some remain yet to be proved and tried.—*Clarke.*

Theodorus, for singing a psalm at the removing of the body of Babilas, being apprehended, was examined with exquisite torments, and so cruelly excruciated from morning till almost noon, that hardly he escaped with life; and being afterwards asked by his friends, how he could endure such extreme torments, said, That at first he felt some pain, but afterwards there stood by him a young man, who as he was sweating with the pain, wiped away his sweat, and oft-times so refreshed him with cold water, wherewith he was so delighted, than when he was let down from the engine, it grieved him more than before.—*Clarke.*

Whilst Augustine was yet a Manichee, his mother Monica had

a dream, that she was standing upon a wooden rule, and being very sad, saw a glorious young man very joyful, and of a cheerful countenance coming unto her, and that he asked her the cause of her sadness; and when she had declared that it was by reason of sorrow that she had for her son, who was then in the way of destruction, he bid her be of good cheer, and wished her to mark and observe, and that she should see her son to be with her where she was; and so she saw her son, standing with her upon the same rule.—*August. Confess.* 1. 3.

Sect. VIII.—*Experiences of this Truth, as to Conversion.*

For some experiences of the angels contributing to our conversion:

On a time, Augustine being in great heaviness, and deep contrition of heart, cried out, Oh! what is this? what suffer I under the tyranny of sin? Unlearned men take heaven by violence, and we, with all our learning, lie grovelling in flesh and blood. After this he had a great conflict, for all his past pleasures represented themselves before his eyes, saying, What, wilt thou depart from us, and shall we be no more with thee for ever? And then a marvellous tempest of weeping came upon him, so that he cast himself on the ground under a fig-tree, and gave full scope to his eyes, which brought forth presently whole floods of tears; and then, behold, he heard a voice, as if it had been of a boy or maid singing, and saying, *Tolle & lege, tolle & lege*; 'Take up and read, take up and read;' Wherefore repressing the force of his tears, interpreting that this voice came from heaven, and was spoken by angels, he took up the book of Paul's epistles which he had with him, with a purpose to read the first chapter that he should find, and opening it, his eye fixed on these words, "The night is spent, the day is at hand, let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light; let us walk honestly, as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, &c." And by this means he was converted.—*Aug.* 1. 8. *Conf.* c. 12.

A woman telling me of her great trouble and grief, and of her long continuance in the pangs of the new birth, she said, that she heard at last a voice, plainly and distinctly saying to her, as she was bewailing her sins, If thou wilt forget, I will forget; If thou wilt forget, I will forget.

A man labouring in the pangs of his new birth, began to despair of salvation, and at last concluded he should be damned; whereupon plotting and contriving what was best to do, he resolved to make away with himself, and not to live any longer: for these reasons; 1. because he conceived, the longer he lived,

the more and greater would be his sin; and, 2. the more would God by his sin be dishonoured; and, 3. the more and greater would his torment proportionably to his sin be in the fire of hell: And even now going to the place where he had appointed the execution and self-murder, there suddenly came into his mind (as if a dart of light had been injected) this very word, Who knows? on which pondering and ruminating, he asked himself, Who knows what? and presently was thrown in (as he conceived) the end of the sentence, Who knows what is God's decree or mind concerning me? neither angels, devils, nor men. On which words pausing and considering awhile, he reasoned thus with himself, If I know not God's mind, it may be I shall be saved. Upon this he staid his purpose, put on by Satan, and probably prevented by an angel, and so went to prayer; and within three days after he received comfort.

SECT. IX.—*Of the Duties that concern us in this respect.*

1. IN all dangers let us stir up faith, and exercise it on the promises of angel-protection: Art thou a soldier? do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with thy wages; march, charge, retreat, do duty according to command; God shall cover thy head in the day of battle, for thou art in thy ways: but if thou invadest the ministerial office, presuming to preach, who never was sent; look to thyself, thou canst not without usurpation pretend to God's keeping, for thou art out of all thy ways: Nor do I fear the frowns of any if offended hereat, and reproving me for giving this just reproof; I am sure I am in my calling, in my ways; and therefore with comfort and confidence may rely on God, and his angels' protection; only that we abuse not the promise as the devil did, let us keep in our ways, that we may be kept safe by the angels; then only is angel-protection to be expected, when we are in the ways God hath appointed; that is to say, within the compass of our general and particular callings: they shall keep thee in all thy ways, or in all thy bounds, or in all thy courses appointed thee by God. Surely we have need to look to ourselves in all our actions, as in eating, drinking, riding, sporting, for even in these God hath set us our ways. We hear of many sad disasters of God's dearest servants, and we need not wonder, if we but consider their wanderings. Alas, they keep not within compass, they are out of their ways, or otherwise they might walk safely without any danger. If Jacob keep but in his ways, he may safely meet with his brother Esau coming against him with four hundred men. Mr. Dodd would say, he cared not where he was, if he could but answer these two questions well: Who am I? and what do I here? Am I a child of God? and am I in my way?—If we were careful of these things, we might free ourselves from all other cares: Oh let us look to our ways!

2. In our sicknesses, sores, dangers of plague or pestilence, let us eye the promise of angel-ministration; "Surely he shall deliver thee from the noisome pestilence:—Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day, nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon-day; a thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right-hand, but it shall not come nigh thee:—There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling; for he shall give his angels charge over thee." Many other promises we have, both to prevent and qualify, and to remove sicknesses, as Exod. 15. 26. Deut. 7. 15. Psa. 41. 3. Heb. 12. 6, 7, 8. Isaiah 40. 31. And well may we live by faith on such promises as these. But why should the promises of angel-ministration be out of use? To what end are these promises, if we may not rest or roll ourselves upon them as well as others? Should God say in our sicknesses, Send to such a physician, and make use of him, and you shall be cured; we should submit: And are not these heavenly physicians of more value? And have we not an express promise, that in their ministration we shall have health? Oh let us eye these promises!

3. In our outward wants, let us have some thoughts of angel-ministration, as to supplies. It is a wonder how all the creation is serviceable to man; the very plants and herbs administer to his food; the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the air, are for his sustenance; the sun and stars contribute to his being and preservation: if any piece of the creation should escape his ministry, one would think it should be the mighty and blessed angels; and yet behold an angel provides bread for Elijah, and water for Ishmael, and all other necessaries for God's children. The world is yours, saith the apostle:—God would never have made this field (the world) were it not for the corn (the godly) growing in it: and as of this corn the angels are the reapers, so they have the care of it for its nourishment and preservation: Art thou a saint, and in want? Surely it concerns thee to shake off idleness, to take the opportunity, and to observe God's providence in all affairs; and amidst those several providences of his ordering, forget not the ministration of the angels: For my part if together with the word, my own experiences may be any encouragement; I do verily think, that rather than thou shouldst die for thirst, an angel will open thy eye to see a fountain, out of which thou mayest fill thy bottle with water, and take and drink.

4. In learning the whole counsel, will, and mind of God, let us turn over those leaves which speak of angels; these are the invisible attenders of the blessed Deity, and without some knowledge and apprehension of them, we shall never attain to conceive of their God and ours, as we ought to do: but in this

knowledge let us mind especially their ministration to our inward man; herein are many depths, yet they are sweet, delightful, and most profitable truths: they come to our phantasms, (the species of sounds, of shapes, or whatsoever else, as they are kept and preserved by the inward senses,) and they move them at pleasure, and put together such conceptions or apprehensions, as are most accommodate and fitted for the knowledge of that truth, which they would suggest to our minds. Is not this worthy our knowledge? Shall the angels take pains to speak to us, and to acquaint us with the knowledge of saving truths, and shall not we willingly hearken to them? O let us listen to what they say; and that they may have matter to work upon, and to speak to us about, let us be ever ready and prompt to receive good images and impressions of things into our fancy: It is said, that the angels cannot put into our fancies what never was there before, as they cannot make a man born blind to dream of colours and their differences; but they can make many compositions and deductions of the images they find there, to the saying of what they will; and therefore let us hear all the good we can, and take heed of receiving ill impressions by our ears, or eyes, or any other way. If any one tell us an ill story once, the devil will tell it us a thousand times; it is a great happiness to this purpose not to know ill: And on the other side, if we see or hear good objects, and that our memories (which are as treasures of all we see or hear) be stuffed and filled with many such good things, then may we comfortably hope, that the angels will make use of all those images to converse with us, and tell us over and over what is the will and mind of God.

5. In the many motions, inspirations, and holy suggestions to this or that good, let us stop awhile, and seriously consider whence these come; certainly if they are of good, and tend to good, they come either from the Spirit of God, or from his holy and blessed angels. I confess the efficacious power on the heart belongs only to the Spirit of God; it is the Holy Ghost that overrules, and melts, and new-moulds us; that so persuades us to charm, and turn, and captivate our souls: yet the angels are ordinances, means and helps of God's own appointment; they are ministering spirits, sent from God to counsel and persuade us to this and that duty: And whether the good motions instilled proceed from the holy Spirit, or from these ministering spirits, it is good for us to listen and hearken to these movings, workings, hints, intimations. Methinks we should hearken to the advice of a friend, how much more to God and his angels! O how sad is it for my soul by sin to counterwork the actings of angels, and breathings of the Spirit! that the angels should knock at our heart, and that the Spirit should put in the hand by the hole of the door, and yet that neither should be yielded unto, but both resisted; this must needs grieve the Holy Ghost,

and grieve the holy angels, that would persuade us, and seal us up unto the day of redemption.

6. In the occasions of evil, or temptations to this or that sin, observe we the stops and lets which often are made by the holy and blessed angels; we little think how busy the angels are for our good! the devil, we know, is like a roaring lion, and the day passeth not over our heads, wherein he offers not this or that temptation to ensnare our souls: And are not the good angels at counter-work? Do not they as often pull us back? Or do not they at least very often hedge and block up our ways, by withstanding the occasions of many a sin? O then say, as Jacob did, "Surely the angels of the Lord were in the preventing of this temptation, and I knew it not." It were enough to strike us into a dread, and to break forth into praises of God, if in the overcoming of any temptation, we had some thoughts of the protection and ministration of angels: Surely (should we say) the Lord and his angels have helped and relieved us, or Satan had prevailed, and we had been quite foiled.

7. In our deadness, fears, sorrows, afflictions, let us remember the words of Elisha to his servant, "Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that are against us." Seldom did the angels appear to any, but this was their language, "Fear not;" as, "Fear not, Daniel;" and, "Fear not, Zacharias;" and, "Fear not, Mary;" and, "Fear not, Shepherds;" and, "Fear not, Paul:" it is one of their prime offices, "to strengthen the weak hands, to confirm the feeble knees, and to say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you. When David said to Abiathar, that may we imagine the angels to say to us, "Fear not, ye sons and daughters of the Almighty, we are your protectors, strengtheners, comforters; and with us, and by us, you shall be in safeguard." O the many quickenings, encouragings, comfortings, that the saints have by the ministration of angels! Next to my God, and my Saviour, (saith one,) I shall ever place my greatest comfort and confidence in the angels of God, neither hath earth nor heaven any creature-comforters like unto these; there is none like them, or to be compared with them.

8. At all times and seasons, let us think and carry ourselves as in the presence of God, and the sight of his angels. If I may instance in some times: As, 1. In time of temptation, let us think of it then. Seneca gave Lucilius this counsel, Whatever he was doing, that he should imagine some of the Roman worthies did behold him, and then he would do nothing dishonourable. Surely, if the eye of God, and of his angels, were ever in our eye, this would be a supersedeas and counter-poison against all sin: Tell me, how dare you sin in their presence, or do that in their view, which you would not dare to do in the sight and pre-

sence of some earthly man? "I charge you before God and our Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels," saith Paul, *q. d.* Consider God's presence, and Christ's presence; or if they work but little with you, consider the presence of the elect angels: surely, the nearer things come to the manner of our presence, the more they will affect us; and therefore consider, that the angels are present with us, in the very room where we are acting our very wickedness: I blush to think (said the author above cited) how often I have done that whereof the angels were ashamed for me; I abhor myself to recount their just dislikes, and do willingly profess how unworthy I am of such friends, if I be not hereafter jealous of their just offence. 2. In time of public service, and public duty, think on it then: "For this cause (saith the apostle) ought the women to have power over her head (that is to say, to be modestly veiled) because of the angels." Elect angels are exact and careful observers, and eyewitnesses, of our behaviour and deportment in the public ordinances. To this end were the curtains of the tabernacle pictured full of cherubims, to signify, that about our solemn meetings, whole troops of angels take notice of our carriage. Surely, if this were considered, we should be very serious in God's worship; yea, how spiritual and heavenly should we be, if our hearts were but fixed on these glorious angels! O ye blessed spirits (said a saint) ye are ever by me, ever with me, ever about me, but especially in God's house I do as good as see you, for I know you to be there, I reverence your glorious persons, I bless God for you, I walk awfully, because I am ever in your eyes; I walk confidently, because I am ever in your hands. My brethren, we are even now, at this time of public meeting, amidst watchful and waking overseers; we are looked and looked through in all our ways, as if heaven were all eyes round about us: Oh then with what fear and trembling, with what reverence and devotion, should we stand or wait here before God and his holy angels?

9. In reference both to others and ourselves, let us learn to imitate the angels:—

1. For others, let us imitate thus, they are as our guardians, physicians, purveyors, tutors, instructors, soldiers, quickeners, encouragers, comforters; so let us in our several stations and places aspire to angelical work: if the angels guard us, let us be as guardians of one another; if they study our health, let us wish health, and endeavour it as we may, one for another; if they purvey for us, let us relieve the necessity of the saints; if they tutor us, let us acquaint one another with the mysteries of grace; if they instruct us, and persuade us to our duties, let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: "Exhort one another daily, while it is called to day:" If they fight for us, and take part with us against the evil angels, let us take part with

the saints against the oppressions and violence of all wicked men; if they quicken, encourage, and comfort us, let us quicken the slothful, confirm the weak, and comfort the feeble-minded. Surely the way to have angels' reward, or to see the face of God is to do the work of angels. Oh let us improve this piece of the creation to our use, as well as all the rest!

2. For ourselves, let us imitate thus: 1. Reverence the majesty of God as they do, Isaiah 6. 2. 2. Stand ready prest to execute the will of God, as they do, Psa. 103. 20. 3. Let us study holiness, as they do; they are of a most holy nature, and therefore are they called holy angels. So be we holy, even as they are holy. It is but equal, that we who expect to be like the angels in glory, should be like them in grace: Many would strive to be like them for gifts and parts, but not for holiness, which yet is the special thing propounded to our imitation; When we say, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven:" no question, this principally is intended, that we should lead here angelic lives; that is, in heaven they are ever doing God's will, there is no sin there, so we should keep harmony with the angels of heaven, and do his will here.

10. To conclude: In all our duties, in reference to the angels, let us "look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith:" they are as the means and instruments of our good, but he is the author and finisher, and all the efficacy flows from him. Hence it is that we must chiefly apply ourselves to him: "Trust not in man, no, nor in princes," saith the Psalmist; so may I go on, Trust not in princes, no, nor in angels, nor archangels absolutely, but still in subordination unto Jesus Christ. This use the Psalmist teacheth us of angel-protection: "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him:" and what then? "O taste, and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in him;" not in them, but in him: our chief confidence must be in none that is on this side God. When God promised Moses that an angel should go before Israel, and yet withal threatened the subduction of his own presence, ("I will send an angel before thee, but I will not go up in the midst of thee;") no marvel if Moses were no less troubled, than if they had been left destitute and without a guard; and that he ceased not his importunity, till he had won the gracious engagement of the Almighty for his presence in that whole expedition; "If thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence." For what is the greatest angel in heaven without his Maker? O then let us eye God, and eye Jesus Christ, in all, above all, and beyond all angel-ministration. It was a sweet saying of one we mentioned before: Blessed be God for the angels, as the author of them and their protection; and blessed be the angels under God, as the means used by him, for our protection, and other blessings: Let the angels have their due, but let God in Christ

be our all in all; for as by him the angels were created, so were they created for him; "and he is before all things, and by him all things consist."

CHAP. IV.

SECT. I.—*Of the Ministration of Angels at our Death.*

THUS far have we observed the angels' ministration, even until death; and yet they have not done, for no sooner death seizeth on the elect, but they minister to them, and in some respects continue their ministration till the resurrection-day. In order to this, we shall first observe their ministration; and secondly, our duties.

1. For their ministration, that known place is most obvious: "And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." And we read of Michael the archangel, contending with the devil about the body of Moses. Whence some observe, that angels have a care not only of the souls, but of the bodies; yea, even of the dead bodies of the saints.

SECT. II.—*Of the manner of Angel-ministration at that Time.*

FOR the manner of their ministration, it relates both to bodies and souls:—

1st. For the bodies of the faithful:

1. In the very agony of death they help and ease them: Thus was Christ refreshed in the midst of his agony by an angel. In like manner are they serviceable to the saints; for if ordinary physicians have their electuaries, how much more can the angels minister cordials in their way?

2. After death they guard the bodies of the saints: The devil would have abused the dead body of Moses, but Michael the archangel contended with him, and rescued the body out of his hands: Satan's malice is without end, and therefore hath he stirred his instruments to abuse the dead bodies of many martyrs; he loves not that dust wherein the holy Spirit dwelleth, but the angels take care of every dust, so that not one shall be lost at the general day: suppose them scattered up and down the world, yet are they but thrown and sown in the earth, that they may spring out again to a glorious incorruption; and in the mean time the angels are a guard, and have a regard to them in their sleep, till the morning of their resurrection day.

2d. For the souls of the faithful:—

1. The angels, in the very article and point of death, are vigilant over them, and oft-times inspire the parting souls with a spirit of divination, or consolation, surpassing all human knowledge. Thus Gregory could say, That sometime souls, before their departure, came to the knowledge of things by revelation; and sometimes by heavenly inspiration they penetrate with their spiritual eyes the very secrets of heaven itself. Do we not see by experience, that when the soul is drawing into a separate condition, it is in a great part delivered from bodily operations, and from the business of the outward senses, and from the commerce with external and worldly matters, which puts it, as it were, into a kind of sabbath, or state of rest? Now the more quiet the soul is, and the more sequestered from earthly and outward things, the more apt it is to enjoy the benefit of internal light, and the better fitted for spiritual commerce with God himself, or with his angels, which (saith one) may also lead us to understand something towards a reason, why men drawing near their departure, are observed to be disposed to presage and prophesy, to be full of comfort, as if heaven entered into them, before they could enter into heaven.

2. The angels stand ready to receive souls separate from their bodies, into their embraces. Macarius, a learned monk, could say, that immediately after death, the choirs of angels received the souls of saints into their own side, into the pure world, and so brought them unto the Lord: Wicked men, when they die, shall have a black guard of angels to receive them, and to haul them down to hell: but the godly shall have a white guard, the same angels that were said before to bear them up in their hands, will then receive them into their arms, and fall upon them with hugs, and kisses, and embraces.

3. Angels convey souls in their hands, or on their wings, through the air and middle region, up into heaven: we cannot go from earth to heaven, but we must needs pass through the devil's territories, or through the air, (for so is Satan called, "the prince of the power of the air;" that is to say, of the airy dominion or princedom,) thither were devils, with Satan their prince, exiled from heaven: whence the Jews have a tradition, that all the space betwixt the earth and the firmament, is full of troops of evil spirits. As it is the opinion of all doctors, (saith Hierome,) that devils have their mansion and residence in that space between the heaven and the earth. And although some against this allege those texts, "For if God spared not the angels which sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;"—and, "The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day:" yet learned Mede hath expounded the first text thus, That he cast them down to

hellward, or to this lower orb, there to be reserved for chains of darkness at the day of judgment:—and the latter text thus, That the evil spirits which fell into this lower region, were there to be reserved, as in a prison, for everlasting chains of darkness, at the judgment day. This is the valley of the shadow of death, through which the souls of saints are to go to heaven; and because of the dangerous voyage, the angels scour and clear the passage for them; they go with them, and fight for them, and with speed and triumph at last convey them to their Father's house. Oh in what pomp and triumph did Lazarus's soul ride on the wings of angels! Never was Dives so honoured in his life, as was Lazarus at his death; he might ride in some chariot drawn with horses, but Lazarus was, and the souls of all believers shall be, drawn at their deaths in fiery chariots; they shall be carried and conveyed into heaven by the angels of God.

4. The angels welcome the souls of saints, in this heavenly progress, to their heavenly Canaan: they are not only porters to carry souls, but they are porters also to receive souls, they stand ready at heaven's gates, to set open the doors, and to bid them enter into their Maker's joy. In that vision which John had of the great city, the holy Jerusalem, he saw twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels: Our English annotations say, that these angels are as porters to receive men into heaven: howsoever Adam was kept out of paradise by cherubims, yet cherubims, and seraphims, and all the host of heaven, are ready to receive the saints into this glorious city. O what a joy will be in heaven at the first admission of these souls! what clasping, closing, kissing, embracing, will be at this entrance betwixt saints and angels! Welcome, say the angels; and welcome, say archangels; yea the principalities triumph, and powers rejoice, and virtues shine, and thrones glitter, and cherubims give light, and seraphims burn in love at the soul's arrival; what congratulations are those amongst the angels, that now the worst of their service is past, that now the poor souls they had in charge, are by their good help escaped, and freed from all the miseries of the world, and snares of the devil, and pains of hell, and are now entered through the gates into the city, where they and their charge shall live together, and love together, and sing together, Jehovah's praise! Never had the saints such welcome in this world, as at this day they have, or shall have, by the angels of God, into the kingdom of God.

5. The angels present the souls of saints before Christ in his throne, and there immediately they receive their sentence. This must needs follow, the angels cannot leave their charge, till they bring them to him, who gave them the charge of them; away therefore they fly to the Lamb in his throne, and covering their faces with their wings, there they present with cheerfulness of spirit his redeemed ones;—*q. d.* 'Glorious King of saints,

hither we bring these souls which thou gavest us in charge to keep, their dusts are indeed returned to earth as they were, but their spirits must needs return to God who gave them; come take them into thy bosom and glory, they are spirits, yea, spirits sublimated, (as being born again of water, and of the Spirit,) and therefore assimilated to thyself; they are pure sparks, now freed and severed from their dust and ashes, and therefore they fly up, or they come up hither on our wings, unto thee the great Spirit, that element of spirits; O that they may find union and coalition with thee! O that they may be with thee where thou art, and that they may for ever behold the glory which thou hast given them! To whom answer is given, as from the throne, Welcome, dear souls, into this glorious kingdom of mine, this is that inheritance I prepared for you before the foundation of the world: Why, you are they whom I created in my own image, after my own likeness; you are my offspring, created immediately by my hand, and in my image, as to your very substance. It is true, I made all the world, and something I made out of nothing, as the chaos was made, but my image other creatures did not bear; you only are spiritual substances, and vital-light; you only have those luminous substances, or substantial lights, from the gift of your creation, which is a degree above the angels, for they have not any light genial and inherent to their essence, but are only mirrors of the increased light: And though a taint came upon you by reason of sin, so that this image wherein you were created, was exceedingly marred, yet by works of grace I renewed this image, and thereupon, that original affinity to me, the God of Spirits, is not only restored, but endeared.' And now this is my sentence, "Well done, good and faithful servants, you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you rulers over many things: enter you into the joy of your Lord."

6. The angels now begin to join in concert with the souls of saints, and to sing those halleluiahs that never shall have end. "And round about the throne were four beasts, full of eyes before and behind,—and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come! And when these beasts give glory, and honour, and thanks, to him who sits on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sits on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy sake they are and were created.—And I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders; and the number of the angels was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength,

and honour, and glory, and blessing.—After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb; and all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders, and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen; blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God, for ever and ever, Amen." Lo, here, all God's saints of the Old and New Testament, called twenty-four elders, comprehended under the twelve patriarchs; and twelve apostles, and all the ministers of Christ, called four beasts, or living weights, comprehended under the four evangelists: and all the angels of heaven, an innumerable company of angels—all joining in one concert: Oh what joys are here! what harmonies are these! what warbling of saints and angels! If Francis (as Bonaventure stories it) hearing but one angel play upon an harp, was so transported with the melody, that he thought himself in another world; how are the souls of saints transported, who no sooner arrive in glory, but they hear more than twelve legions of angels, accompanied with a numberless number of glorious saints, all singing at once, Halleluiah; Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty! praise, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto God, and Christ, and the Spirit of Christ, for ever and ever!

Sect. III.—*Of the Experiences of this Truth.*

I shall add some experiences of this blessed truth:—

1. They help us and ease us in the pangs of death.

Mr. Hawkes, being entreated of his friends, that in the midst of the flame, wherein he must die, he would shew them some token, if he could, that the fire was not so intolerable, but a man might therein keep his mind quiet and patient; this he assented to, and promised, that if the rage of the pain were intolerable, he would lift up his hands above his head, before he gave up the ghost. At the stake, he mildly and patiently addressed himself to the fire, and, after his fervent prayers made to God, fire was put to him; in it he continued long: and when his speech was taken away by the flame, his skin drawn all together, and his fingers consumed with the fire, so that all men thought he had been dead; he being mindful of his promise, suddenly lifted up his hands burning of a light fire, and with great joy clapped them three times together; whereupon there was such shouting amongst the people, especially by those who knew the meaning of it, as the like had scarce been heard; and so the blessed mar-

tyr, presently sinking down into the fire, gave up his spirit unto God.—*Fox's Martyr.*

Mr. James Bainham, being at a stake to be burnt, in the midst of the flames, which had half consumed his arms and his legs, he spake these words: O ye papists, behold, ye look for miracles, and here now ye may see a miracle, for in this fire I feel no more pain, than if I were in a bed of down; yea, it is to me as a bed of roses.—*Idem. ibid.*

There was in Mechlin one Andrew Thissen, who had three sons, whom he carefully brought up in the knowledge of the truth: two of them were condemned to the fire, and one of them feeling the violence of the flame, said, O what a small pain is this, compared to the glory to come! and so committing their spirits into the hands of god, they finished their race.

Henry Voes and John Esch, being brought to the stake, for their testimony to the Protestant religion, when the fire was kindled at their feet, one of them said, Methinks you do strew roses under my feet; and presently after they quietly slept in the Lord.

William Cowper, being ready to die, said, Now, my soul, be glad, for at all parts of this prison the Lord hath set to his pioneers to loose thee; head, feet, milt, and liver, are fast failing, yea, the middle strength of the whole body, the stomach, is weakened long ago; arise, make ready, shake off thy fetters, mount up from the body, and go thy way.

2. They inspire our souls with divination, or comfort.

A child of a christian gentlewoman was so given to prayer from its infancy, that before it could well speak, it would use to get alone, and go to prayer; and as it grew, it was more frequent in prayer; at last, when the child was but five years old, and whipping of his top, on a sudden he flung away his scourge, stick, and top, and ran to his mother, and with great joy said unto her, Mother, I go to God; will you go with me? She answered, My dear child, how dost thou know thou shalt go to God? He answered, God hath told me so; for I love God, and God loves me: mother, will you go with me? She answered, Dear child, I must go when God pleaseth; but why wilt thou not stay with me? The child answered, I will not stay, I must go to God. And the child did live about a month after, but never cared for play more, and then fell sick, always speaking, that he must go to God; and died in that sickness.—*White.*

Charles Bridgeman prophesied his departure; and how strange a prophecy! not only that he must die, but foretelling the very day. On the Lord's day (said he) look to me; neither was that a word of course, which appeared by his often repetition, every day asking, till the day came indeed, What, is Sunday come? At last the looked-for day came on, and no sooner had the sun beautified that morning, but he fell into a trance: What (think you) meant his blessed soul, whilst the body itself used such an

action? his eyes were fixed, his face cheerful, his lips smiling, his hands and arms clasping in a bow, as if he would have received some blessed angel, that there was at hand to receive his soul; but he comes to himself, and tells them about him; how he saw the sweetest boy that ever eyes beheld, and bids them be of good cheer, for he must presently go with him: One standing near, as now suspecting the time of his dissolution, bids him say, Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit. Yes, said he, Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit, which is thy due; for why, thou hast redeemed it, O Lord my God most true. And presently after he died.

If a man, without all observation of physical criticisms, shall receive and give intelligence, many days before, what day or hour shall be his last, to what cause can we attribute these but to our attending angels.

A good gentlewoman, laying on her death-bed, Mr. Dodd was sent for to her, who spake of heaven; and to fit her for that glory, she told him, that she felt the comforts of God, and that she could as hardly at that time forbear singing, as formerly in child-bearing she could forbear crying; and shortly after she died. —*Clarke Mart.*

Mr. Holland, the day before his death, calling for a bible, continued his meditations and expositions on the eighth to the Romans, for the space of two hours; but on the sudden he said, O stay your reading! what brightness is this I see? And they said, It is the sunshine. Nay, (saith he) it is my Saviour's shine: now farewell world, welcome heaven, the day-star from on high hath visited my heart; I doubt not but you all see that light, but I feel a light within me, that none of you all can know. And then turning himself to the minister who preached his funeral sermon, he said, Sir, I desire you would preach my funeral sermon, for this night I die, and speak this from me, that God deals familiarly with man; I feel his mercy, I see his majesty; whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth, but I see things that are unutterable. And being thus ravished in his spirit, he roamed towards heaven with a cheerful look, and soft sweet voice; but what he said was not understood: at last raising himself on his bed, as Jacob did upon his staff, he ended his blessed life with these blessed words: O thou fiery chariot, that camest down to fetch up Elijah, carry me to my happy hold; and all you blessed angels, that attend the soul of Lazarus, to bring it to heaven, bear me, O bear me into the bosom of my best beloved, Amen. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly; and so he fell asleep.—*Leigh.*

Mrs. Drake, a woman of great temptations and desertions, at last growing sickly, and free from her desertions, she became incessant in her discourses of heaven, and of the things of God. The Lord's day before her death, she called all her children

together, and with many admonitions, and zealous instructions, and heavenly discourses, she spent much time that day with them; the Tuesday following, Mr. Dodd came, and spent some time in heavenly discourses, and then went to prayer; and suddenly as prayer was done, she brake forth in a wonderful manner in these expressions: Oh, ho, ho, what is this? what is this? what is this? I am undone, undone, undone, I cannot endure it; O, O, O, let me be gone, let me be gone, I must be gone, I cannot tarry? Oh what shall I do? Lo, lo, the angels are come, they wait, and stay for me: O dear mother, why hold you me? I must be gone: Oh he is come, he is come, he is come; now you have it, you have it, you have it, (meaning that now they had the issue and fruits of all their prayers,) why hold you me? let me be gone, my work is done: O call, call, call! where is my crown, fetch me my crown, bring me my white robes, quickly, quickly, quickly; why run ye out? the angels stay. O it overcomes, overcomes, overcomes me: what shall I do? what shall I do? what shall I do? with innumerable such swift expressions as could not be remembered; and withal she heaved up still all the time with fixed eyes towards the house-top, as though she had seen some vision, and would have flown away from them all.—*Idem.*

Robert Milner, on his death-bed, was so filled with joy for many days together, that he could not hold, but proclaimed the sweetness and goodness of God from day to day: he professed his joys were unutterable; he carried, as if he had been in heaven aforehand; only once talking with some Christians about him, he cried out, Oh I have lost it! But presently he added, Oh I have it again, it is come, it is come! At last, drawing near his end, he sent for the relator as formerly, and desired his prayers; and whilst he was in duty, commending his soul unto God, he suddenly roused and stirred up his body, crying and saying aloud with much vehemency, "The Lord, the Lord, merciful and gracious, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgressions and sin:" and in the very act and heat of his proclaiming the name, and goodness, and sweetness, and mercy of God, he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

Lord Henry Otto, being sentenced to death for religion, he told the minister waiting on him, I was troubled, but now I feel a wonderful refreshing in my heart; adding, with his hands lifted up to heaven, I give thee thanks, O merciful Father, who hast been pleased to fill me with so much comfort; O now I fear death no longer, I will die with joy. As he was going to the scaffold, he said to the minister, I am sure that Christ Jesus will meet my soul with his angels, that he may bring it to an everlasting marriage, where I shall drink of a new cup, a cup of joy for ever. Upon the scaffold, lifting up his eyes to heaven, he said, Behold, I see the heavens open; pointing with his hand to the place, where others also observed a certain brightness

which dazzled their eyes.—And so he received the stroke of the sword. *Clarke's Mart. in Bohemia.*—In like manner, Bandicon being on the scaffold with his father, fixing his eyes upon heaven, said to his father, Behold, I see the heavens open, and millions of angels ready to receive us: Father, let us rejoice and be glad, for the joys of heaven are open to us.—*Idem, in his Persecution of the Church in the Low Countries.*

3. They stand ready to receive us into their embraces, and convey us through the air into heaven.

Romula being trained up by Redempta, fell into a palsy, that she was fain to keep her bed; but the sickness of her body being sanctified, and tending to her soul's health, on a certain night she hastily called for Redempta, saying, Come mother, come mother; who straitways, with her other disciple, rose up; and as they were about midnight by her bedside, suddenly there came a light from heaven which filled all the room, and then they heard a noise, as if it were of many that came in; the door being shaken, and thrust open, as though there had been a great press of people: straight after that light followed a wonderful pleasant smell, which did greatly comfort their trembling hearts. Romula perceiving that they could not endure that abundance of light, with sweet words comforted Redempta, that stood trembling by her bedside, saying, Be not afraid, mother, for I shall not die at this time. And when she had often repeated those words, by little and little the light vanished away, but yet the sweet smell remained still. Upon the fourth night after, she called again for Redempta, who coming in with her other disciple, as formerly, suddenly they heard two choirs, singing before the door without, the one as the voices of men, that began the psalms, and the other of women that answered; and while those heavenly funerals were in celebrating before the door, the holy soul departed this life, and was carried in that manner up into heaven; and the higher these two choirs did ascend, the less did they hear that celestial music, until at length they heard no more. And then also that sweet and odoriferous smell vanished away—*Greg. Dialog.* 1. 4.

Fructuosus, bishop of Tarracona in Spain, with his two deacons, Augurius and Eulogius, suffered martyrdom; the cause of their punishment was, for professing of Christ's name; their judge and condemner was Emilianus; their death was by fire, into which they were all cast, with their arms bound behind them; but their bands and manacles being loosed by the fire, they lifted up their hands to heaven, praising the living God, to the great admiration of them that stood by; praying also, that the element which seemed to fly from them, might work his full force upon them, and speedily dispatch them, which was after their request obtained. In the mean space, as they were in the fire, there was a certain soldier in the house of Emilianus, who

did see the heavens above to open, and these aforesaid martyrs to enter into the same; which soldier likewise shewed the sight the same time unto the daughter of Emilianus the president, who beholding the same sight with the soldier, was a present witness of the blessedness of them whom her cruel father had condemned.—*Fox Acts and Monuments, vol.* 1.

Philip de Mornay, L. of Plessis Marly, lying on his death-bed, in the midst of his prayers was heard to say, I fly, I fly to heaven; the angels of heaven are carrying me into the bosom of my Saviour.—*Clarke's Life of Philip de Mornay.*

Mrs. Stubbs, on her death-bed, speaking to them that were by, said; 'Oh would to God you saw but what I see! for behold I see infinite millions of most glorious angels stand about me, with fiery chariots ready to defend me: these holy angels, these ministering spirits, are appointed of God to carry my soul into the kingdom of heaven, where I shall behold the Lord face to face, and shall see him, not with other, but with these same eyes.'—*Life and Death of Mrs. Katharine Stubbs.*

4. They welcome us into heaven, and present us before Christ in his throne.

Helmont, in his Vision of the Soul, tells, that in the year 1610, after a long weariness of contemplation, that he might acquire some gradual knowledge of his own mind, fallen by chance into a calm sleep, and rapt beyond the limits of reason, he seemed to be in a hall sufficiently obscure; on his left hand was a table, and on it a fair large viol, wherein was a small quantity of liquor, and a voice from that liquor spake unto him, Wilt thou honour and riches? At this unwonted voice he became surprised with extreme amazement; and by and by, on his right hand, appeared a chink in the wall, through which a light invaded his eyes with unwonted slendour, which made him wholly forgetful of the liquor, voice, and former counsel. Presently he awakened, but his ancient intense desire of knowing the nature of his soul, in which he had panted incessantly for thirteen years together, constantly remained with him. At length, amidst the anxious afflictions of various fortunes, when yet he hoped a sabbath of tranquillity, he had in a vision a sight of his soul: it was a transcendant light, in the figure of a man, whose whole was homogeneous, actively discerning a substance spiritual, crystalline, and lucent by its own native splendour. And then it was revealed to him, that this light was the same which he had a glimpse of before. If the demand be, what becomes of this light after its separation from the body? Dr. Charleton, who translated that book of Helmont, gave it in this poesy; *Lumen de Lumine,* "*Light of light,* and, *Light to light.*" The angels of light take these luminous substances, or substantial lights, and present them before that uncreated Light, the Lord of glory. What the estate of this life is, and what it will be, is sung by Mr. Moor, in his *Pre-existency of the Soul:*

Like to a light, fast lock'd in lantern dark,
Whereby by night our weary steps we guide
In slabby streets, and dirty channels mark,
Some weaker rays through the black top to glide,
And flusher streams perhaps from horny side:
But when we've past the peril of the way,
Arriv'd at home, and laid that case aside,
The naked light how clearly doth it ray,
And spread its joyful beams as bright as summer's day.

Even so the soul, in this contracted state,
Confin'd to these straight instruments of sense,
More dull and narrowly doth operate;
At this hole hears, the sight may ray from thence,
Here tastes, there smells; but when she's gone from thence,
Like naked lamps, she is one shining sphere,
And round about has perfect cognizance:
Whate'er in her horizon doth appear,
She is one orb of sense, all eye, all airy ear.

So nothing now in death is to be dread,
Of him that wakes to truth and righteousness,
The corpse lies here, the soul aloft is fled,
Unto the fount of perfect happiness;
As earth returns to earth, this light no less
Returns to him that gave it, where it is
Presented by the angels with excess
Of strange melodious music, joy, and bliss,
O then how doth that Great Light this light greet and kiss!

5. They joy in sweet harmony of praises that never shall have an end.

A certain man, called Servulus, drawing near his end, called for all such strangers as lodged in his house, desiring them to sing hymns with him: and as he was singing, all on a sudden he cried out aloud, saying, Do you not hear the great and wonderful music which is in heaven? and even in that instant his soul departed this mortal life. All that were present felt a most pleasant and fragrant smell, whereby they argued the verity of his saying; and that he and angels were then in concert singing halleluias together in heaven.—*Gregor. Dialog.* 1. 4.

Another, called Guthlake, drawing near his end, told Berterline his scholar: The time is come, my dear son, wherein I must pass to Christ: and lifting up his hands and eyes to heaven, he yielded up his soul; when, at the very instant, Berteline saw as it were a fiery tower reaching from heaven down to the earth, the brightness whereof was so wonderful, that the pale sun might envy so great a lustre, whilst the angels themselves were heard to sing melodious tunes of joy.—*Felix.*

SECT. IV.—*Of the Duties that concern us in this respect.*

2. FOR the several duties that concern us in this respect:—

1. Weigh not the pains or pangs of death, as if they were intolerable; but rather pitch we the anchor of our hope on the firm ground of the word of God, who hath promised "in our weakness to perfect his strength,—and not to suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear,—and to give his angels a charge to bear us up in their hands." If the Lord lay one hand upon us, he puts another hand under us; yea, he chargeth his angels to bear us up in their hands, and to allay our pains; it proves so to many, that the very thoughts of death more pains than the pangs of death; howsoever, it may comfort us that the angels stand by us, who either will help us in, or help us through, those pangs of death, that we be not swallowed up by them.

2. Take we no care of our bodies after death, save only to commit them to the earth. Methinks the angels might take off that carking care which many have: what if thy body be used as the Irish papists used the bodies of dead Protestants, who cast some into ditches, and left others to be devoured of ravenous beasts; yea, and digged up others that have been formerly buried, and then left them as dung on the face of the earth; yet the angels see and take care that every part, and piece, and member of thy body shall be preserved and kept safe unto that day of our Lord; the earth in her womb, or the sea in her gulfs, or beasts in their bellies, or whatever is the grave of the bodies of saints, they are but as God's close chests, to keep in them a part of the Lord's own treasure; and when these chests shall be opened, (as they shall be in that great day of the resurrection of saints,) then shall those bodies be brought out again by the holy angels; and then shall they be as good, nay, better than ever they were before; "for our vile body shall be made like the glorious body of our Lord and Saviour, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

3. The nearer we draw to our end, let us draw nearer to God and his holy angels. This is done by having a special care of our souls, and by doing those duties that we owe both to God and his angels. I list not to enter into controversies; I deny that any worship is to be given them, or that we ought to pray to them; yet (as the contemplative bishop said) this devotion we do gladly profess to owe to good angels, that though we do not pray unto them, yet we do pray to God for the favour of their assistance and protection, and we do praise God for the protection and ministration that we have from them. And yet further, we come short of our duties to these blessed spirits, if we entertain not in our hearts an high and venerable conceit of their wonderful majesty, glory, and greatness, and an awful

acknowledgment, and reverential awe, of their glorious presence; an holy joy, and confident assurance, of their vigilant care; and lastly, a fear to do ought that might cause them to turn away their faces in dislike from us. All these dispositions are copulative; for certainly, if we have conceived so high an opinion of their excellency as we ought, we cannot but be bold upon their mutual interest, and be afraid to displease them by our heinous and abominable sins. The man that is going out of the world, and within a step or two of death, should, methinks, be very fearful of neglecting the angels, or of grieving the angels: Why, alas, if they watch not over him now, if now they inspire not the soul with blessed motions and pious thoughts; if now they fail of their office, when there is more need of it than ever was or ever will be; oh what will a poor soul do? Come, think we of this, ere it be too late; yea, the nearer we draw to our end, the more tender let us be of our care, and to respect these blessed spirits; and who can tell, but as in the very agony Christ was comforted by an angel, so these ministering spirits may at such a time minister comfort and consolation to our souls? We have seen an heaven of joy entering into some, before they entered into the joy of heaven.

4. Make to ourselves friends of the angels, that when we die, they may receive us into everlasting habitations. Thus Christ advised us in respect of riches;—make use of them by your beneficence to the poor, that they may pray for you, and make your advantage of being rewarded by God: this is the meaning of "make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness." And if worldly riches, that either in getting, using, or keeping, do administer matter of sin, (and therefore are called unrighteous mammon,) may be so improved, how much more may we improve the angels, and gain by the angels, if we make them our friends! But how should we make them our friends? I answer: 1. Let us resemble them in their purity, piety, innocency. Suitableness of spirit and life, will breed friendship: if we are but pure in our measure as they are pure, they will delight to befriend us here, and to lay a foundation for a far more familiar acquaintance in heaven hereafter. 2. Let us apply ourselves to them, as desirous and willing of their friendship: let us converse with them as friends, assenting to what they say, and making up holy conclusions with them, and replies, which they will find ways to understand. O the blessed motions that they make continually to our souls! Is it not their joy to gain us, and to win upon us? and to that purpose are they not suggesting this and that good thought to save our souls? O then let us answer them in their motions, and receive whatever they administer!

5. Though we go through the valley of the shadow of death, let us fear no evil, for the angels will be with us. It is natural for us to fear death; and indeed, as it is the destruction of the

creature, and parts body and soul; as it leads the body through a dark, dirty way, the grave; and as it leads the soul through the devils territories, the air,—it is no wonder if nature startle, and be afraid of it. But the Christian hath many considerations to allay his fear, and to cheer up his spirit: as, 1. Death is but the separation of the soul and body; it is not the annihilation of soul and body, but a fair shaking hands between two parting friends: it is as if the wife should take leave of her husband to go see her father; to whom the husband says, that he will follow after her, and be with her in the morning: Farewell, my dear, says the soul, I must go to my father; And farewell, my dear, says the body, I will come after thee, and be with thee in the morning of the resurrection. It is true, they cannot part without many a tear and kiss; but what needs fear? the morning comes, as well as the night. 2. The body's passage through the grave, though dark and dismal, yet is safe and secure, and fit for rest and sleep: "He shall enter into peace, they shall rest in their beds." When a righteous man dies, or his body is buried, he is but gone to bed; and therefore we call those places where the dead are laid up and buried, dormitories, or sleeping-places; they sleep for a time; but they shall awake, and rise up again at the last day. 3. The soul's passage through the air, though full of devils, yet it is accompanied with a safe convoy: there is a white regiment of glorious angels that will bring the souls of saints through all perils "to mount Sion, to the city of the living God, to the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant." Now, can the wife fear an enemy, when the husband hath sent a puissant army to convey her safely to himself? How then should we fear the way, or fear death, or devils, when the angels (who are stronger than all enemies) have a charge to conduct us to the Bridegroom of our souls? and they will not, cannot fail of what they have in charge: they are the army of heaven, the saints' own guard, the officers and soldiers of the Lord of hosts; and therefore they will be sure to perform their trusts, we need not fear it.

6. Let us prepare and make ready for that glorious welcome which the angels will give us into glory: would you know how to prepare? 1. Procure their joy by your conversion? "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." The conversion of a sinner is the gratulation of angels; and if they joy at your repentance, how much more will they joy to see you in heaven with them! 2. Procure their love by the strictness and holiness of your lives; live like angels; bring soul and body, as near as may be, into a spiritual frame;

this is the way of friends to procure welcomes here on earth, if they will but maintain a familiarity, and sympathy, and nearness, and likeness to one another in mind and manners: O thus do you, and then you may expect angels' welcome into that city of glory.

7. Wait upon God, with encouragement that one day the angels will present us to Christ in his throne without spot and blameless. It is now our complaint, Oh the sin whereof we are guilty! and oh wretched men that we are, who shall deliver us from this body of death! but the day is coming when we shall be freed from these complaints. As Christ's ministers have a charge, and when they have done their work they will present to us Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 11. 2.; and as Christ himself hath a charge, and when he hath done his work, he will present us to himself, Judg. 24. and to his Father, Colos. 1. 22.: so the holy angels have a charge also, and when they have done their work, they will present us to Jesus Christ; how? even as ministers do, "that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ;" or as Christ himself doth, "that he might present us to himself a glorious church, not having spot, nor wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish:" so will the angels do, "even present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." Let us press on to perfection, even upon these hopes, that howsoever it is with us now, surely we shall be faultless, we shall be equal unto the angels, equal in grace, and equal in glory; for to that end will they present us to Christ in his throne, and accordingly will Christ pronounce his sentence, "Enter ye into the joy of your Lord."

8. Praise we God for his mercy of angel-ministration from first to last. This we must do in heaven, only begin we this tune and ditty while we are upon earth; and if we cannot do it as we would, let us call in angels to join with us in blessing, praising, and admiring God: this was David's practice; "Praise ye the Lord, praise ye the Lord from the heavens, praise ye him in the heights; praise ye him, all his angels; praise ye him, all his hosts." The angels desire no better employment that such as this; they love to sing the tune of the gospel most; and therefore stir we up them, and stir we up ourselves with them, to be much in praises of our God. Surely he deserves a thousand thousand hallelujas, and that we should bless him upon a thousand stringed instruments. Here is fuel enough; the Lord kindle a great fire in every one of our hearts, to inflame them with the love of such a God as this is! It was the last speech of dying Chrysostom; Glory be to God from all creatures! And if I should die this hour, I could wish my soul in no better temper: "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in

strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. Bless the Lord, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure. Bless the Lord, all his works, in all places of his dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul."

CHAP. V.

SECT. I.—*Of the Ministration of Angels at our Resurrection.*

THE last period wherein the angels minister to saints, is, from the resurrection to the glorification of their souls and bodies in heaven. In this last, as in all the former, I shall observe, 1. Their ministration. 2. Our duties.

I. For their ministration, we may consult these texts:—

"And he shall send his angels with the great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God."

"The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity.—So shall it be at the end of the world; the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just."

"Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God.—And I will not blot his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."

SECT. II.—*Of the Kinds of Angel-ministration at this Time.*

FOR the kinds of their ministration at this time:—

1. The angels will summon all the saints to appear before Jesus Christ, in his judgment-seat. This is done by the sound of a trumpet: "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet.—The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." What this trumpet is, I have discussed elsewhere; and I take it to be metaphorical, viz. a sound formed in the air like the sound of a trumpet; and for the archangel, it is not so limited to one, but that all the archangels, and all the angels of God, are thereby understood. O the day, when all the angels shall be sent of Christ to bid all the world to appear before him! This is that voice on which Jerome so often meditated: Whether I eat, or drink, or whatsoever I do, methinks I always hear that voice of the trumpet sounding in mine ears, "Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment." This is that voice, of which Chrysostom said, O the terrible trumpet, that all elements shall obey! it shall shake the world, rend the rocks, break the mountains, dissolve the bonds

of death, burst down the gates of hell, and unite all spirits to their own bodies. This voice shall take from death all her spoils, and cause her to restore again all that she hath taken away from the world. In this ministration the saints may rejoice; be it never so terrible to the wicked, it is nothing to them but an awakening out of a sleep; as if the angels should shout and say, Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the time of the singing of birds is come; arise, arise, ye saints, and come away.

2. The angels will gather all the saints together to the judgment-seat of Christ. In this are involved these particulars:

1. That the angels will collect the dust of all the bodies of the saints. This all the schoolmen hold. The collection of the dusts of the blessed is by the ministry of the blessed angels. They can move and remove bodies as they please. As gross and inferior bodies are in order governed by those that are superior and more subtle; so are all bodies ruled and disposed of by spirits endowed with life. Augustine goeth further, and says, that irrational spirits are governed by rational; and rational creatures that transgress, are governed by rational creatures that are just. Gregory joins with him, saying, invisible creatures do give motion and sense to carnal bodies which are visible; and so nothing is disposed of in this visible world, but by another creature which is invisible. Hence Aquinas concludes, that in all things which are corporally done of God, he is pleased to use the ministry of angels, and that therefore the gathering of the dust and the reparation of the bodies of all the saints, is only by the ministry of the angels at the resurrection-day. Come, Christians! keep faith and a good conscience; though men prevail over our bodies to kill them, and so scatter the ashes of them all the world over, let never any uncomfortable damp of slavish fear vex your blessed hearts: be not you afraid of evil tidings, or of destruction when it cometh; for the angels have a care of every piece, and part, and particle, of your bodies; not one hair of your heads, not one atom of the substance of those bodies you bear about you, shall be left in the grave, or in any part of the world, but it shall be gathered by angels, and brought together into one heap or lump.

2. That the angels will form, and fashion, and organize, those dusts so brought together, into perfect, complete, and solid bodies; this also is affirmed by schoolmen: 'Whatsoever appertains to the transmutation of bodies, as to the condensation of some parts, God is pleased therein to use the ministry of angels.' Indeed, the animation or enlivening of the body by the infusion of the soul, is (as they say) immediately of God, without any operation of angels; for as the soul was immediately created of God, so must the soul be again united to the body by the immediate hand of God himself; yet the collection, preparation, and reparation, of our bodies, are done by angels. O the power of

angels ! This eye shall be put to this head, and this hand to this arm, and this arm to this body, and so every part to part, and member to member, by the ministration of angels : What need we care if all these be eaten of worms, or serpents, or other creatures, yea, of cannibals, or savage men ? Certainly they must all be restored again ; I shall not want this eye, this hand, this finger, this joint, this nail on my finger's end, at the resurrection-day. "The hand of the Lord was upon me, (saith Ezekiel,) and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley, which was full of bones ; and he caused me to pass by them round about, and behold there were very many in the open valley, and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live ? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest."—Then the Lord bade him prophecy, and as he prophesied "there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone, and then the sinews of the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them above, but there was no breath in them ;" and then the Lord bade him prophesy unto the wind, "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." Why, thus will it be at the resurrection-day : the angels' ministry will be like the prophet's prophecy ; they will give a shout, and collect the bones, and then put them together, bone to his bone, and then cover them with sinews, and flesh, and skin ; only the breath or soul must be infused immediately by God himself, and then shall the saints live, and stand upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

3. That the angels will bring the saints, thus raised, organized, and quickened, to Christ's judgment-seat. The apostle speaks home to this, "The dead in Christ shall rise first ; and then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." A willing welcome-force is here upon the saints, to transfer them, or carry them into the air, where Christ is in his throne : Now, how shall this be done ? Why, they shall be caught up, saith the apostle. By whom ? Some think by the clouds, as if the clouds should first descend, and then enwrap the saints, and so serve as chariots to carry them up to Christ in the air ; but I would rather think, by angels, as if the apostle should say, All the saints at the last day, both those raised and those changed, shall be caught up by the holy angels into the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air : And is not this agreeable to the words of Christ, that angels shall gather together his elect ? Whither together, but to the clouds, or to that place in the air where they shall meet the Lord ? O the blessed ministry of endeared angels ! They that before carried up Lazarus's soul into Abraham's bosom, must now carry up Lazarus's soul and body, yea, all the souls and bodies of all the saints, into the air, where shall be the blessedest meeting that ever was ; there shall Christ meet with his saints, and never part again : indeed, here sometimes we meet, and anon we part ; now

he comes, and gives us the kisses of his mouth, but ere while he is gone, and we cry after him, "O where is he whom my soul loveth? I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved, that you tell him that I am sick of love: but when the angels shall bring us together at this day, we shall never part more; for we shall meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be for ever with the Lord."

4. The angels will separate the good and the bad, the sheep and goats. "They shall gather out of the kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity.—They shall sever the wicked from amongst the just." This separation is sometimes given to Christ, "he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set his sheep on the right-hand, but the goats on the left." Christ shall do it originally, but the angels ministerially, derivatively, and by way of execution; Christ commands it, and the angels accomplish it. O the joy, and O the horror, of this particular! —horror to the wicked, but O what joy will it be to the saints to meet together, and to see all the wicked in the world thrust out of their society! they were before thorns in their sides, and pricks in their eyes; many a tear did they cost the saints to see their wickedness; "Rivers of tears run down mine eyes, because man keep not thy laws:" many a heart-grieving heart-vexing thought hath pierced the saints, to know their sinfulness; just Lot was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked. Ah poor man, it was an hell to him, to dwell with Sodomites, for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds. Well, but now they shall never grieve them, trouble them, vex them any more; the angels will not only deliver just Lot out of his ill neighbourhood for a time, but they will free all the righteous from all the unrighteous in the world for ever and ever: Not one Sodomite, nor one impenitent sinner, shall stand with Christ's sheep on his blessed right hand; never more shall the saints cry out, and say, "Woe is us, that we are constrained to dwell with Mesech, and to have our habitations amongst the tents of Kedar;" but rather shall they go on with the Psalmist, and say as in the next verse, "Our souls have long dwelt with them that hate peace and holiness, but now we shall never dwell with them any more." This will be the angels' work at the last day, they will gather out of the kingdom all things that offend, all scandalous wretches, and vile persons, all froward hearts, and privy slanderers; all that have high looks, and proud hearts, all that David said he would throw out of his house, and from the city of the Lord, will they also throw out of the kingdom of God, and of Jesus Christ, that they molest not Christ's sheep any longer.

4. The angels will be spectators, admirers, witnesses, approvers, of the mystery of godliness, in the sentence of Christ on his saints. This piece or part of Christ's meditation in absolv-

ing saints, is amongst the rest of those great mysteries of godliness seen of angels. Seen? how seen? It is not a bare sight, but such a sight as astonisheth the understanding, and takes up the heart of blessed angels, "which things the angels desire to look unto;" their whole spirits are taken up with it, they cannot look off it, but stand, and view, and admire, and leap for joy to see the passages; they are wrapt up above themselves, to hear the blessed sentence coming out of Christ's mouth, "Come, ye blessed of my Father;" nor is that all, but as they see, so they witness and approve the acts and passages of Christ in rewarding saints, "I will confess them (saith Christ) before the angels of God;" that is, at the last day I will take them for mine, I will confess them to belong to me, I will pronounce on them the sentence of absolution, I will do to them as if a king should come in company, and choose out one, and salute him familiarly, and call him by his name, and take him by the hand, and confess him before all to be his friend; so will I confess the saints to be "my friends, my jewels, my peculiar treasure, my temple, and tabernacle, where I place my name, the dearly beloved of my soul, children of the kingdom, yea, the kingdom of heaven itself;" or, if more honour can be given them, I will confess them to be "my garden, my vineyard, my spouse, my second self, one with me, as I and my Father are one:" And be ye witnesses of this my sentence, O ye angels! I would have you to take notice of it, to see it, behold it, hear it, admire at it, and to witness with what equity and proportion I deal with saints; they confessed me before men, I confess them before angels: they are not ashamed of me, nor of my name, before kings and princes, and therefore now I am not ashamed of them, nor of their name; so far am I from blotting their name out of the book of life, that now I "confess their name before my Father, and before his angels!" Witness it, O ye angels, yea, and approve of it, consent to my sentence, acknowledge my goodness, justice, mercy, in saving these souls, by saying Amen, and bidding them welcome into heaven, and then you have done with your ministration.

At this last passage the angels receive that augmentation of joy, of which some divines have written. Hall and Andrews, stars of great magnitude in this orb of the English church, have both supposed, that angels themselves shall receive an augmentation of happiness at the day of the last judgment, when they shall be freed from all their charge, and employments. As rest is the end of all motion, so the perfection of blessedness consists in rest, and therefore the angels being now discharged of that charge which they took at the beginning, they have no more to do, but in one choir to join with the saints, and everlastingly to sing halleluiah, and again halleluiah, and amen halleluiah.

SECT. III.—*Of the Duties that concern us in this respect.*

II. FOR the duties that concern us in this respect:—

1. Meditate as if you heard the angels sounding their trumpets, and saying, Come out of your graves, and appear before Jesus Christ your judge. Surely these ministering spirits, these especial messengers, these new-covenant officers, that now wait on us, and as tender nurses will ere long lay us asleep in the bed of the grave, will in the morning of the resurrection awake us out of sleep, and say to us, as the angel to John, Come up hither. And is not this worthy our morning thoughts, or evening thoughts, or midnight thoughts? When we are awake in the night, and compassed with darkness, and all is quiet and still, suppose then we heard the sound of angels shouting in the air, Now, souls, come to your sentence, either of eternal weal, or eternal woe. Methinks this meditation should work and make every one of us say, Lord, if it were thus, what would become of my soul? In what case were I? In what condition were I, if the angel now sounded? Was my repentance such when I went to bed, as that now I dare look the Judge in the face? was my faith so active, or is it now so strong, that I can with confidence go to Christ, and say, Speak, Lord, speak out the doom that thou intendest to pass upon my soul, for I trust in thee. If so, it is well; the Lord keep us continually in such a prepared frame: but if it be otherwise, O let us think of it, and prepare for it; let us not put off repentance from day to day, but let the instant or present moment be the time of turning from all sin to God, and let us become now, even now, as we would wish to be then, "when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." It were a blessed meditation that would work us into such a frame; now the Lord come in, and both set us at it, and appear to us in it.

2. Cheer up, ye saints, "Arise, shine, for your light is coming, and the glory of the Lord will rise upon you:—who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?" No sooner is the summons given, but all the saints "shall be gathered together from the four winds, from the one end of heaven to another." O what a sight will it be to see the eastern saints, and western saints, and nothern saints, and southern saints, flying on the wings of angels, to Christ on his throne! Why, here is matter of joy: if our evidences are but clear, if we are but assured that he that is our Judge, hath shed his blood for us, and given himself for us, I wonder that we are not more spiritually cheerful. Come, though the world scatter us, persecute us, drive us to hills and holes, yet we shall meet together at the great marriage-supper of the Lamb, and there will be joy indeed; the very four-thoughts of this should, methinks, fill our hearts with joy unspeakable, and full of glory; "Let us be glad and rejoice, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.—Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb; these are the true sayings of God." Blessed sayings! in which, if we open the eye of faith, we may

see matter of truest joy, and spiritual ravishment: we are all invited, if we are but saints, to the marriage-supper of the Lamb. "Come, and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God:" If you say, how should we come, that must die, and lie buried in graves, till we rot, and return to our first principles? I answer, these remoras will not, cannot hinder; for our very dusts shall be carefully gathered by the hands of angels; and when they are gathered and brought together, they shall be put into form and fashion, far better and perfecter than now they are, by the ministration of angels; and when they are formed, and fashioned, and revived, and spiritualized, we shall be caught up by the angels into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, thus far will the angels minister to us; and therefore, what should hinder but that we must all meet him, and feast with him? And if so, how merry should we be in the mean time, who are admitted, and invited, to this gracious and glorious feast! Away, away, all horrors of guiltiness, false fears, slavish terrors, damps, and droopings! Christians! we must part, and for a time lie and sleep in solitude and rottenness, but we shall meet again; there will be such a congregation of saints at the last day, as never was since the world's creation; and as we hope to be a part of that general assembly, and church of the first-born which are written in heaven, let us now rejoice in the Lord, and again rejoice.

3. Comply with the angels in separating yourselves from the society of the wicked. I know the command, "Let both grow together until the harvest;" the angels do not, nor must they separate the wheat and tares before the last day, but then will God say to his reapers, "Gather thee together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn." Come then, and do you know on your part that which the angels will do on their part at the last day. You will say, What, would I have you separatists? I answer, not in opinions, or heterodox doctrines, but in conversation; my meaning is, I would not have you to run with the world into the same excess of riot; "If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or extortioner, I would have you with such an one not to keep company, no, not to eat. And yet that I be not mistaken, some kind of society, or familiarity, I allow withal; there is a society, more common, and cold, and general, as in trading, bargaining, buying, selling, &c. And this, Christians must needs exercise with the men of this world, except they will go out of the world: but there is a society more special, dear, and intimate, and in this respect "I have written to you (saith the apostle) not to keep company with fornicators," (*i. e.*) not to have any ordinary, voluntary, friendly, dear, and intimate society with them. Alas! who in his right wits would run upon a man, whom he sees hath the plague-sore running upon him? And what Christian in his right mind spiritually, having any fear of God in his heart, life in his soul, or

tenderness in his conscience, would delightfully thrust himself into the company of wicked men? It was writ of Jesus Christ, that he was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." And such a separatist was David, "I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers; I have hated the congregation of evil doers, and will not sit with the wicked." And indeed to think of the angels' work at the last day, it were enough to make us comply, and to prepare for such a work all the days of our life. Oh what should we do with them in our hearts, and dearest thoughts, who shall have no better companions hereafter than devils and the damned!

4. Confess Christ before men, that he may confess you at the last day before the angels of God; you may think you are in prosperity, and flourish, you fear not martyrdom, there is not the least occasion of the confession of Christ, his truth, and gospel, unto death, or danger, as the word imports: and therefore this last advice is not seasonable. But I answer, 1. We see the boldness of our common adversaries: error on all hands grows insolent, and proud, and daring; so that now God calls to us from heaven 'Who is on my side? who?' 2. We know not how soon occasion may be both for confession and martyrdom. One observes, that 'usually before any great persecution befell the church, the holy men of those times observed, that there was some great decay of zeal, and of the power of godliness, or some mutual contentions and quarrels amongst the people of God, or some such sin or other that provoked God against them; and then, as the shepherd sets his dog upon the sheep, when they go astray, to bring them in, so God lets loose wicked persecutors upon his own children, to bring them in unto himself. And he applies this to ourselves. It is true (saith he) through God's mercy, we yet enjoy the gospel of peace, and the peace of the gospel; but how short a time it may continue, no man knows—this we know, that schisms, heresies, and blasphemies, never abounded more in the church of England than at this day, that the spirit of division never raged more, that profaneness never more outfaced the glorious sunshine of the gospel, than at this day; and surely these are the forerunners of judgment.' O then let us learn this lesson, as we would have comfort at the last day! Come what will come, let us confess him before men; let no creature make us to deny the Lord Jesus Christ; if his truth call for it, let us stand it out against all his enemies, yea, even against the gates of hell, and devil and all. And then we may comfortably hope, that when Christ shall come in the clouds with his mighty angels, he will confess us, and pronounce a blessed sentence upon us, before God, angels, and men. *Amen, even so be it. Amen, and Amen.*

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